

# The Saturday Review

## of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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## Travel Books

**I**N the Western Hemisphere we are still only half weaned from our European environment. Even the Indian, so the anthropologists say, was but half at home in his continents and had not yet learned to endure the extremes of American heat. We are more adaptable, and have met a tropic summer and an arctic winter half way; but in fall we still live as if showery England were our home.

In Northern America October is the time for travel. Our spring is brief and belated, and never in American literature will be a dominant theme of lyric poetry, as in England. It comes in a mist of greens that harden almost over a week-end into the monotony of summer. But October turns slowly through lucent days that dawn upon blue aster and crimson maple and close upon garnet slopes of sumach and purple domes of oak. Woods drop their veils and sight is free of their inner chambers. The South is hazy; the clear North at sunset sends down a wind tingling with spruce. The birds travel slowly through drifting birch woods and across blurred meadows; but weather is only one stimulant more for the busy American. Not since Thoreau has one of us who earns his own living failed to capitalize the thrill of October. Indian summer drops gold unheeded behind the back doors of such a nation.

At least we read travel books in autumn—the publishers see to that. More and more Americans seem to take their real travel vicariously. Their real travel, for taking the Broadway Limited, with barber and manicure inside and a blurred strip of signboards without, is movement, not travel; not such travel as lies at everyone's back door in the American October. Taking travel vicariously is better for the soul than a hauling across America, or whirring a ribbon of road, bound to the wheel of your car, blind with the dust of its speed. For the best travel books do precisely what most of us cannot do—no more than write poetry and make music—the authors must themselves be October if it is in October they are journeying.

There are two kinds of good travel books, books of solid fact and books of penetrative imagination. Honest books that give facts of a scene or a country are rare. We want fewer books of "Beauties" and "Historic Houses," less sentimental description and romantic anecdote, and more studies that lift a land into perspective and explain it.

No such stipulation for solid detail can be made with the imaginative writer who can set up a reciprocal current between his personality and a momentary environment, and then make his book. Thus came the great travel books, among them Boswell's Corsica, Arabia Deserta, Kingslake's Eothen, Thoreau's Maine Woods, Stevenson's Travels With a Donkey, The Bible in Spain, A Sentimental Journey. Nor do we lack modern and familiar example in the art of William Beebe and Rockwell Kent, or exotic instances in the recent travels of Ossendowski.

What makes the great books endure is very decidedly not what is seen so much as how it is felt and written. Gilbert White of Selborne proved long ago that the world can be thrilling, rightly apprehended, at home. There is an agitation and excitement set up by all experience in the souls of these born travelers which communicates to the reader as by waves of the ether some of the essential reality of things observed, so that he responds, thrilling as he reads. The sombre, brooding mind which feels dell and dingle, and the words

## Other Eyes

By WILLIAM ROSE BENET

**S**HAGGY ocean, harsh ocean, hot and dense, Fibrous, feverous, seaweed-stifled; only thence Colors sometimes, sometimes sounds, in gleam and gloom, Waves of light and rustling murmurs that assume Sound and color of my old and cold and deep and emerald sea!"

Of the Forest said the Nereid to me.

"Sky congealed, that you can feel; cold sky, Shattered, smoking, glittering to the eye, Weltering, heavy, fallen, sorrowful, profound; Ponderous in rainy ruin grovelling on the ground; Rolling thunder, hurling cloud, in its frenzy to be free!"

Of the Ocean, said the Oread to me.

"This lake above; this lake all light and not to touch; Blue as pools, yet fleeced with foam beyond the clutch; Shadowless of leaf or blossom; far, and yet so near, as now; Darting serpents down through blackness, fire-fanged, rending branch and bough; High, still, dark, with lights a myriad like some vast and jewelled tree!"

Of the Sky, said the Dryad to me.

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## Next Week

Fall Announcement Number

Published by Time Incorporated,  
Publishers of TIME,  
The Weekly News-Magazine

of Isobel Berners, and the gestures of The Flaming Tinman in "Lavengro" is "Lavengro." The story, the incidents, seen by you or me away from the power of Borrow's *aura*, are nothing. You met Petulengro yesterday and thought he was a sneak thief.

Borrow took his October, and so did Rockwell Kent, and Masefield in his time, and so does Robert Frost whenever the colleges will let him. Unfortunately, the authors of many of the travel books now piling upon bookshop tables could not rise to their occasions. They have felt that because they have been to the Gaspé or Ketchikan or Andorra they should write a book about it, whereas unless you know your region as few travel writers do, your only subject is your own soul, and unless that is changed by experience there is nothing to write. It is better to walk in October, no matter how insensitively, than to read such books.

## The Fictionist's Problem

By HARVEY O'HIGGINS

**T**HEY write me that Leeds is dead. Leeds is dead. And it means nothing whatever to the writing world. Nor to any other world. For twenty years or more, I saved his letters, convinced that there would come a day when any page of his would be a literary relic, if he could only live long enough to conquer the public that he had challenged. And he never so much as made his challenge heard by any public at all. He had an amazing equipment for a fictionist—wit, observation, experience of life, the gift of words, an infallible imagination, a most penetrating intelligence. And they have all been wasted. He and his work lie buried in the Potter's Field of forgotten authors. As far as I can see, he might as well have lived alone on a desert island that sank into the ocean after his death and carried down with it every thing that he had ever written, unread by anyone but himself. Two hackneyed lines about Keats are literally true of him: the poet's own epitaph on himself, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water," and the *nunc dimittis* of Keats's sweetheart on him, "Let him rest forever in the obscurity to which circumstances have condemned him." And those lines are as true of Leeds as they were untrue of Keats, because Keats did his work before he died, but the first thing that died in Leeds was his power to do the work that might have made him remembered.

\* \* \*

It's a strange problem. Twenty-three years ago, I read a story by Leeds in a monthly magazine, and clipped it, and filed it away, delighted. It was an anti-romantic story of how a young man saved his sweetheart from drowning—saved her with brutal efficiency—and all but earned her hatred in the heroic act. It was true and it was funny; and in those days of determined monthly sentimentalism, it was a drink of good, cold water to a mouth sticky and tongue-clogged with soda-fountain syrups. When I came to know Leeds, later, I found him like his story. He was ambitious to present intelligently in fiction a picture of life that should be accurate, shrewd, and illuminating. And he had the ability to do it. I thought that nothing could stop him from becoming the idol of artists, the pet of critics. He was already sceptical of the public and of their vicegerents in office, the editors and publishers. He had already heard too often the editorial ruling on his stories, "We do not think our readers are interested in these aspects of life." But he was fairly young. He was optimistic. And he believed that in time he could build himself a reputation and mount on it high enough to overawe editor and public alike.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile he had to make a living and support a family. Since he could not do it by writing fiction, he undertook to do it by writing humorous articles. They made his name a trade-mark for something less than his best work. When he could no longer endure being merely "a funny man," he turned to scientific articles, to sociological articles, to informative articles of all sorts. In these he used his intelligence mordantly on problems of society in which very potent emotions are involved—religious emotions, caste emotions, herd emotions—and they exploded and back-fired on him. He fought them through many long, slow, gruelling years of inevitable defeat.

He was driven, at last, to earn what he could by various makeshifts—chiefly by teaching—but he understood that this was only a temporary business;

he was to come back to his fiction in the fulness of time, with a wealth of experience. And he never came back to it. And it was apparent that he never could come back to it. Whenever he found a few days of leisure to devote to fiction, he had no inspiration. He had nothing to write. He was bitter, sick, empty.

Now he is dead.

\* \* \*

What is it? What is this problem? It's a problem not considered in any of the books that tell young literary aspiration how to write. The critics do not speak of it. The editors seem ignorant of it, except when they decide "We do not think our readers are interested in these aspects of life." The public are blind to the difficulty and act their part in it dumb. And the writers are too often unaware of it except as they feel it in what has been called "the silent pressure of past rejections."

Isn't this the crux of the matter, that the writer of fiction, producing that day-dream which is his story, must—if he is to be popular— invent a dream which the reader might have been glad to invent for himself? At his simplest, such a reader, if he is worried and driven and frustrated by life, will ask to dream of success and of triumph over obstacles and of that egotistic satisfaction which life denies him. If he is a bit more subtle, it may be enough to tickle him to a laugh with a hero who makes a joke of being worried, driven, and frustrated—since to laugh at a thing is also to dominate it psychically. If in his life the reader is repressing natural instincts and emotions that are seeking release, he will be eager to follow a day-dream that releases them, but the dream must be careful to outwit slyly and without offence the ideal in him that is authorizing his repressions. And so forth—to whatever psychanalytical limits you please.

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The point is that all this has nothing to do with the artist's ambition to present intelligently a true picture of life. It has nothing to do with any other intelligent purpose of the artist—or of the critic. It has almost nothing to do with intelligence at all. It is largely an affair of the dream-mind, the instinctive and emotional mind that underlies the conscious intellect. If that mind, in the fictionist, produces for him the plots and the themes and the characters and the incidents of dreams which the great mass of readers would have been glad to dream for themselves, then he will be a best-seller, no matter whether or not he writes with artistic intelligence. And if his dream mind does not secrete such desirable fictions, then, though he write like an angel, he will still be damned to the outer darkness of public neglect. He may enjoy the favor and the praise of a small body of readers who appreciate intelligently the intelligent qualities of his work, but the charmed herd will never come lowing to him with their spiritual hunger and their pecuniary milk.

That, I think, is what defeated Leeds. The stories that he wished to write were not the fables that many others wished to read. The dreams of his instinctive and emotional subconsciousness were not desirable dreams to the rest of the world; and all the artfulness of intellect could not make them desirable. That first story of his, the lover's rescue of his sweetheart, threw a cold beam of disillusion on the heroic dream of how many enamored young egos! In his desire to write such a story, as throughout his life, he was psychically set to make war on what he called "buncombe and hokum," wherever he found them; and wherever he found them, they fought back and defeated him.

\* \* \*

Is there any solution for such a problem? There was none for Leeds. Driven by his subconscious impulse, he responded as automatically as his public responded to another psychic need that was unfortunately not his. Happy are the fictionists whose dreams are desirable; they inherit the earth. For the others, some can imitate the dreams that have been popular in the past, and write "pot-boilers" that are acceptable, but these counterfeits have not the spontaneity of original inspiration, and the unhappy author, at war with his subconscious impulse, suffers a frustration that commonly ruins his happiness. The wiser author will yield to his inner drive and let it express itself as it may, in the hope that he may find enough readers of his own subconscious mood to be delighted by him. And if he is a Leeds, he is merely out of luck.

## The Return to Spoon River

THE NEW SPOON RIVER. By EDGAR LEE

MASTERS. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1924.

Reviewed by O. W. FIRKINS,  
University of Minnesota

M R. MASTERS has returned to Spoon River, and the readers who have followed his migrations will be glad. Too much, of course, must not be asked from such revivals; even if the author equals the first result, he could not duplicate the first achievement; in revisiting, one does not rediscover, the North Pole. But the Spoon River method—the method of completeness in trenchant brevity—is as congenial to the faculty of Mr. Masters as, one is tempted to suppose, it is uncongenial to his temper. The enforced terseness demanded by the treatment of three hundred and forty-four persons in three hundred and forty-four pages is as sanative for Mr. Masters as a straight-backed, hard-backed chair is for a spine with capacities for erectness and inclinations for lounging. This fine self-discipline may or may not have been the motive that drew the poet back to the cemetery in Spoon River. He himself adduces another motive. New types, new conditions, have sprung into being or prominence since 1914, the date of the first "Anthology," and these, in the collapse or insolvency of their normal frames, have found a place in the vast receivership of death. Wordsworth, in a tersely powerful lyric, pointed out that the graves wheel with the planet; Mr. Masters adds that they move in time as well as space; they progress with man as they revolve with earth. Grant Mr. Masters's premise, that the conscious dead still voice their living minds and characters, and his inference is perfectly defensible.

Mr. Masters's grip, where he applies his grip, is strong. In the biographical summaries, in which the new Spoon River most closely parallels the old, the vigor of his stroke seems absolutely unabated, as the defiant rancor, which was so conspicuously a part of that vigor, is unpeased. But he has been less persevering in his adhesion to the method, that is to say, less faithful to biography, than in the volume of ten years ago. Only about half of the monographs in the "New Spoon River" epitomize lives; the other half record an argument, assert a truth, or even (more rarely) vocalize a sentiment. He has not, as in the earlier "Spoon River," put the muzzle on his speculations. He resembles Browning in several ways, in the taste for dramatic monologue, for instance, and in the wish to philosophize the sensational. But he is like him more particularly in the union of two diverse traits: first, width of contact with the varied, bristling, bustling, actuality of concrete men and things, and second, an irrepressible bent toward the speculative grapple with the problem of the universe, or in terser phrase, the ways of God to man. In the new book the author has not checked this speculative impulse, and the consequences of this refusal are important.

\* \* \*

The first consequence is that the book is more subjectively individual than the first "Spoon River." Even that "Spoon River" was, in its way, a Mastersville; in the second, about half the characters are undisguisedly the author's proxies. This does not foster drama. Another consequence is the recession of the idea of death and its concomitants. Biography, with death as its terminus, keeps the grim finality in mind; but speculation, which is timeless, emerges from the vault and leaves the cemetery. Since we last saw the graveyard at Spoon River, the stones seem to have settled and sunk, and the grass has risen and thickened, and the place of death reminds us only now and then of its heartbreaking difference from a common field. Even in the old Spoon River it was often hard to remember that these lusty combatants and challengers were really dead; at worst it seemed a case of burial alive, and one could almost fancy that the hard, pounding lines were the rappings on the coffin of the wrongfully imprisoned life, insisting on its restoration to the day. Of course, the obscuration of the place in the second volume is far from total; picturesque allusion, sometimes highly effectual, recalls our truant imaginations to the spot.

Mr. Masters's thought is less valuable to literature than his pictures, but it is interesting to observe that the Spoon River method benefits the thinker no less decidedly than the artist. Mr. Masters

thinks in sallies; there is scarcely any current topic on which he cannot ask one pointed question; and a mechanism which shuts his mouth after that question has been asked is a boon for which his readers should be grateful. The present volume, offering much clear thought in small compass, is a useful abstract of his mind, and the thought which it reflects surprises us often by its diversity and sometimes by its elevation. In all judgments of its tendency two allowances must be made. First, Mr. Masters is not formally responsible for any of these views; the formally responsible parties are Michael Gallagher, Euripides Alexopoulos, Nicholas Koslowski, Heine La Salle, Ezekias Painter, Didymus Hupp, and other examples of the grotesque in nomenclature. Second, allowance must be made for the presence of two philosophies in Mr. Masters, one in which his mind dwells and works, and another to which he is related as querist and amateur, which he tastes and samples, or simply visits and accosts. He has, in a word, convictions and curiosities. He is savoring an idea, for instance, when he repudiates the ethics of the father's conduct toward the Prodigal Son as emasculate, and the ethics of the beatitude, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" as mercantile. This is to out-Christianize Christianity, to reject as ethically crude the most ethical of religions in its most intuitive and kindling moments. He mounts to these sublimities as he might to the top of the Woolworth Tower—to look about him keenly and come down again. There are other surprises in these monographs. At least four of them magnify Christ; one upholds the Bible. The last doctrine which might seem congenial to Mr. Masters is that of the redeeming sanctity of pain; yet that is the precise note on which the book closes. "The Urge of Pain: God,"—by which he means that God is created in man and by man through man's pain.

\* \* \*

Mr. Masters on lower ground seems more at home. We have, for instance, the familiar notion of man as a fine, hearty animal with exemplary appetites; give him his woman, his drink, and his horse-race in forms and measures chosen by himself, and you will make him happy, wise and virtuous. The logical step from this cheerful hedonism to the gospel of redemption through suffering is not so arduous as the unthinking might imagine. The link lies in the relation to society, the compact majority, as if you please, the embattled stupidities. You are an epicurean; society, being puritanical, proceeds to persecute you; in the resistance to this persecution you become a stoic, perhaps a hero, at the outmost verge of possibility, a martyr. We are not called upon to suppose that Mr. Masters has exemplified all these transmutations in his own person, but our philosophies are much more agile than our characters, and the core of his system is that war with society which does associate the epicurean and the sacrificial points of view by serving at the same time as the offspring of the first and the parent of the second. To crush middle-class orthodoxy, Mr. Masters would snatch a weapon indiscriminately from Christ or Lucifer; the deed done, he would probably return the borrowed weapon politely to the Christ; as to Lucifer, he would hesitate and reflect.

Only a bare word can be spared for the droppings into lyricism which occur, not often indeed, but at intervals of unexpected shortness. Most of them are marked by that pale transparency, that filtered mildness, which is so strangely characteristic of this author's Muse when she remembers definitely that she is a Muse. There are, however, moments of poetic power. Two of these occur in the bit headed "Howard Lamson," which deals generally with the stony impassivity of the dead. It begins with the fine line, "Ice cannot shiver in the cold," and closes on a line perhaps as nobly imaginative as poetry has ever reached in its commerce with this powerfully sombre theme—"My dream is what the hillside dreams."

"The Three Musketeers" by Dumas has been published in revised braille, for American blind readers, and is being distributed free to all public libraries throughout the United States which maintain facilities for such readers, and to all the institutions established for the education and care of the blind. The announcement has just been made by the Permanent Blind Relief War Fund, which is the donor of the books.

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## A Search for God

ARNOLD WATERLOW: A LIFE. By MAY SINCLAIR. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1924. \$2.50.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

**I**N THE maturity of her artistic power, always considerable and brought through a long, experimental and honorable career as a writer to a technical assurance equalled by few of her contemporaries, Miss May Sinclair has now published a novel which will, I suspect, be widely hailed as a masterpiece. Here, certainly, one must acknowledge, is an elaborate, highly finished, sincere, and challenging work of fiction; and in the present review I shall take it for granted that we are dealing with a book far above the ordinary both in matter and manner.

"Arnold Waterlow: A Life" is an account chiefly, of the mental and spiritual development of its hero from babyhood to the middle forties. The story is included, roughly, within the latter third of the nineteenth century, extending on into the first decade of the twentieth. When we first meet Arnold's mother, an important figure in this novel, she is wearing crinoline; and Arnold, her youngest, is two years old. The novel contains 446 pages. It takes seventy-five pages to get Arnold past his seventh birthday; another seventy-five to get him past his fourteenth; and Chapter XXV begins on page 202 with the statement, "Arnold was twenty-one." What most casual novel readers would call the "real story" of the book is contained in the remaining 244 pages. This is leisurely preparation with a vengeance! And it is necessary to ask why Miss Sinclair has indulged herself in so detailed an account of the babyhood, youth and adolescence of Arnold Waterlow.

She has called her novel "A Life," although a "life" usually includes some record of the later years and death of one's real or imagined protagonist. In this "life" the final chapters are missing, while the earlier chapters would seem to be disproportionately detailed. Yet Miss Sinclair is not a writer who fails to see her work as a whole, or who would be apt to produce a lop-sided composition. She has not (granted her real purpose) done so in this instance. Only she has erred, I think, in calling her essay in spiritual development "A Life." It is not a life she has written. She has created for our contemplation an ideal figure, Arnold Waterlow—a man as nearly perfect as she could conceive him: an exemplar. This is always a dangerous attempt in art. It is too difficult to make us believe in such a being. But Miss Sinclair has wished to make us believe in Arnold Waterlow, and she has brought all her artistic cunning and all the resources of what we are calling the "new" psychology to the task.

It is one of the dogmas of this "new," or Freudian, psychology that if you would understand the psychic peculiarities of an adult you must first seek their origins in the environment and experiences of his infancy and early childhood. That Miss Sinclair has been deeply influenced by the Freudian psychology all intelligent readers of her later novels must be fully aware. It is yet to be proved, however, that this influence has had a desirable effect upon her art; and in the present novel I am certain that the effect has been unfortunate. Wishing, as I have suggested, to make us believe in Arnold Waterlow, in this ideal figure, she has been seduced into a far too elaborate study of his early environment and of its effects upon his infantile, his childish, and his adolescent "psyche." True, in this way she does succeed in establishing a quasi-scientific basis for her hero's later adventures in self-abnegation, and makes credible for us the introspective, idealistic habits of his mind and the firmness and sweetness of his character. But it is questionable, not the less, whether the game was worth the candle. I can only speak for one reader, and others (many of them, I hope) may well find the first two hundred pages of Arnold Waterlow sufficiently fascinating in and for themselves. That they are filled with fine and telling strokes and contain passages of beauty and moments of true significance, I most gladly admit. Nevertheless, taken as an introductory whole, they bored me, and I do not suppose I am the only impatient reader upon whom they will lay this artistically perilous burden.

And now, winning through to his maturity, what manner of man is this Arnold Waterlow? He is the seeker for the supreme Reality; the spiritually persistent seeker who must (and who does at length)

attain that ultimate peace of the mystic—finding God in himself and himself in God. And perhaps the key to his maturity, to his difficult acceptances of duty and the self-renunciation of his life, can best be found in his complete understanding of that hard saying: "He who loves God cannot endeavor that God should love him in return." Not that he came to this understanding easily, for Arnold Waterlow is not a "once born" mystic; he is a mystic who must seek and suffer and fight through spears. . . . Mr. Godden, the philosophic tea-merchant, his friend and employer, knew him best perhaps: "You're a born mystic, Arnold; and a born sceptic. You'll never have peace. Your mysticism and your scepticism will be fighting each other all your life long." Only, in this prediction it seems that Mr. Godden erred—since Arnold having lost all, renounced all, accepted all, does find peace.

He had come to the end of his long seeking. The God he had found last night was more than the object of his metaphysical thinking, the Thought of thought; more than the Reality seen in the sudden flash of his mystic vision; closer than thought or seeing, he was the Self of self, the secret, mysterious Will within his will. Where It was, there could be no more grief.

It is not my purpose to tell here through what dark waters of love and abnegation Miss Sinclair's faultless hero attains this quietude. For the core of this strange novel is Arnold Waterlow's search for God, and its true climax is quoted just above. It is enough to say that after the long, the too long preparation, Arnold's story develops an intellectual



From "The Artist's London" (Stokes)

and emotional intensity which cannot fail to move any reader who perseveres. And yet, when once the book is laid aside and reflected upon, I must confess that it leaves me disappointed. In spite of Miss Sinclair's sincerity and skill, she has not for me, in this instance, breathed a full breath of persuasive life into the ideal figure of her imagination. I do not quite believe in Arnold Waterlow—although I still most wistfully long to do so. But let us hope the fault is not Miss Sinclair's—whose effort in this book is a noble one—but that it lies rather in some deadness, some critic's blindness in myself.

## The Power of a Wrong

A PILGRIMAGE. By JOHAN BOJER. Translated by JESSIE MUIR. New York: The Century Company. 1924. \$1.75.

Reviewed by HANNA A. LARSEN

This life—it's a strangely variegated piece of work. Stitch after stitch I've put in myself, and I hold the thread in my hand; but one mistake, and it can never be put right again; the costly embroidery is hopelessly ruined.

**T**HE one wrong stitch which makes everything else wrong is the subject of "A Pilgrimage." In this short but powerful novel Bojer returns to a problem which has always fascinated him, the problem of a wrong which, once it is set free in the world, runs on, as it were, by its own motive power and can never be recaptured or annihilated.

A young woman of good family, but inexperienced, is seduced and abandoned. She bears her

child in the dreary old maternity hospital in Christiania, and while still weak she succumbs to shame and suffering and fear of the future so that she gives up her child. The wealthy people who adopt it demand of her that she shall resign all claims to it and not even ask their identity.

At first she feels nothing but a great relief; but as her strength returns the consciousness that she has sold her child for money is borne in on her and fills her with remorse. Soon the longing to find it becomes her one obsession. To this end she lies and intrigues; she sells herself for a fortune, though this time in marriage; she works her husband's death, and she even deserts her other child to be free in her search for her first-born. She proclaims her shame to the world; she scours the country, and follows every clue even to the other side of the earth.

It is not merely mother love that moves her. That would be too simple for Bojer, who likes to probe into the less obvious recesses of the mind. She is really carrying on a pilgrimage for her own salvation, for unless she can find her child and thus justify her crimes by the result, the foundations of her life crumble.

Involuntarily one thinks here of a moralist of another generation: the creator of Gwendolen Harleth and Maggie Tulliver. One imagines how George Eliot would have used the sin itself to initiate the sinner into a higher, deeper spiritual life. She, too, preached as her cardinal doctrine that a wrong can never be undone, but she showed how remorse can be changed into an ever-present fear of doing wrong again.

Bojer is deeply in earnest; he is in his way a prophet of righteousness. But is his morality here really moral? He says in effect that a wrong once committed, even if bitterly repented, goes on corroding the moral fibre and at last disintegrating the whole character.

It is this assumption that rouses a certain inner resistance and prevents complete surrender to the story. Still no one can help admiring the strength and unity of treatment. Bojer always tells a story well. The reader's interest is gripped in the first paragraph and carried on from brisk incident to graphic description without a moment's flagging. In "A Pilgrimage" we miss the homely, pleasant humor which makes "Dyrendal" so delightful and is present also in "The Last of the Vikings." Naturally the stark and gloomy nature of its subject precludes the author's customary witty sallies, and it is to his credit as an artist that he holds to the integrity of his theme. In its warm humanity and its sympathy for the poor and oppressed the present book is nevertheless akin to the other two novels which have so greatly strengthened Bojer's hold on the affections of the American public.

## The Soul of a Child

MARBACKA. By SELMA LAGERLOF. Translated from the Swedish by VELMA SWANSTON HOWARD. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1924. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JULIUS MORITZEN

**A**merican readers of foreign literature may consider it a fortunate circumstance when, as in the instance of Selma Lagerlöf's "Marbacka," the translator has succeeded in rendering the soul of the narrative with such faithful regard for the original Swedish text. Indeed, Velma Swanston Howard is no newcomer with respect to Lagerlöf books in their English translation. Beginning with "Jerusalem" and including "Marbacka," Miss Howard has no less than nine of this Swedish writer's novels to her credit as translator.

To call "Marbacka" an autobiography of the soul of Selma Lagerlöf, as the jacket of the book will have it, takes no account of what her emotional experiences were after she grew up. For, in fact, this book is reminiscent only of her childhood's days, and written, as it is, in the third person, has the fairy-story touch throughout. In many other of her books Miss Lagerlöf registers impressions even more autobiographical than what she has to tell about the family life at Marbacka, the ancestral home. For all that, what pictures she here paints of her idolized father, Lieutenant Eric Gustaf Lagerlöf; of her mother, whose economic domesticity stood at strange contrast to the carefree head of the house; of sister Anna and brother John; of the austere Mamselle Lovisa, the aunt; and then Back-Kaisa, the nurse-maid! They are unforgettable glimpses behind the

scenes of a well-to-do Swedish homestead where love dwelt secure and childish fancies roamed within their own circumscribed world.

This is how Miss Lagerlöf makes the nursemaid stand vividly before the reader:

Back-Kaisa was strong, patient and dutiful. She was a person to be depended on. When her sister and mistress went off to a party they could rest assured that she did not run out and leave the children alone in the nursery. If only she'd a more delicate touch she would have been admirable. But hers were no gentle clutches when little arms had to go into dress-sleeves. When she washed the children the soap always got into their eyes; and when she wielded the comb they felt as if every wisp of hair were being torn from their heads.

American readers who make their first acquaintance with Selma Lagerlöf in "Marbacka," the simplicity of which is its outstanding characteristic, have a surprise in store when turning to such red-blooded books as the "Story of Gösta Berling," for instance. Where gentleness encompasses everything having to do with Marbacka and its environs, in a number of her other works the passions and worldliness hold sway. And yet, idyllic as it is, the reminiscent aspect of this, Miss Lagerlöf's latest book, fits in perfectly with all that has gone before. It is little to be wondered at, therefore, that this writer holds the great love and esteem of her countrymen. It is not unlikely further that "Marbacka" may be the means of gaining for Selma Lagerlöf an even larger audience than before, and a word of commendation must go to the American publishers for their enterprise in making one more of her fascinating books available in English.

## Murderers' Row

**THE FATAL COUNTESS, AND OTHER STUDIES.** By WILLIAM ROUGHEAD. Edinburgh: W. Green & Son, Ltd. 1924.

**MURDER AND ITS MOTIVES.** By F. TENNYSON JESSE. London: William Heinemann, Ltd. 1924.

**FAMOUS CRIMES AND CRIMINALS.** By C. L. MCCLUER STEVENS. New York: Duffield & Co. 1924. \$3.00.

**DRAMATIC DAYS AT THE OLD BAILEY.** By CHARLES KINGSTON. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1924. \$3.50.

**UNSOLVED MURDER MYSTERIES.** By CHARLES E. PEARCE. London: Stanley Paul & Co., Ltd. 1924.

Reviewed by EDMUND LESTER PEARSON

Author of "Studies in Murder"

THESE five books extend, altogether, to some twelve or thirteen hundred pages, and fully three-fourths of the pages are concerned with murder. The rest of them are, for the most part, devoted to other forms of crime, so this is an especially interesting group of books. Interesting, as most of us say frankly; a few still think it refined to be horrified or disgusted by the subject. Writers of reviews, as a rule, make no qualifications when they say that they find such books readable; a scattering few have first to satisfy the conventions by using the words "morbid" and "gruesome." That done, they go ahead, and speak as the others.

All these books were originally published in Great Britain within the past few months. Hardly as many American books on this topic have been written in a dozen years; in fact, I think that only two books exclusively about murders in America have been published in the last ten years. An explanation of this curious fact would be entertaining; it might even be valuable. The English, very moderate in their commission of murder, and efficient in repressing it, like to write and read books about it. We, who practice murder with industry, and are far more concerned for the future happiness of the murderer than with any attempt to prevent the crime, have seemed to think that the subject has enough dignity for Sunday newspapers, but rarely enough for a book. American murders compared with the British are as twenty to one; for books on the subject from the two nations, the proportion is about reversed.

In this group of books are represented two, or perhaps three, methods of writing about crime. Mr. Roughead's "The Fatal Countess" is so far

superior to the others that it is somewhat unjust to all of them to discuss it as if all were in one class. The author is a conscientious and painstaking historian, who has gone to original sources; he is learned in the law, and has, moreover, command of a literary style. His book, like his earlier ones, is of more than current interest; it is of permanent value, and should therefore be purchased by libraries. Miss Tennyson Jesse's "Murder and Its Motives" is the result of some little study, and is possibly (although I hope not) a pioneer in a new method of writing about murder. The author is less interested in the discovery of fact than Mr. Roughead, and more with psychological speculation around a small amount of fact. Give her a modest bit of information, and she floats easily away on the wings of something like psycho-analysis. Without desire to be flippant to the author of a meritorious book, nevertheless I often felt a desire to write flippancies on the margins near some of its paragraphs. But these are the very paragraphs which will be read with reverence by all who genuflect at the name of Sigmund Freud, and all who accept as wisdom the utterances of the alienists who recently gathered in Chicago to assist in the happy delivery of Messrs. Loeb and Leopold.

\* \* \*

The other three books, Mr. Stevens's "Famous Crimes," Mr. Kingston's "Dramatic Days," and Mr. Pearce's "Unsolved Murder Mysteries," are quite different from the other two, but as alike to each other as three peas. They are, in many respects, like rather good articles from the average Sunday newspaper supplement. Sometimes they are deliberately neglectful of dates and other exact information, on the theory, I suppose, that this kind of treatment heightens the "human interest" of the story. Too many dates and dry details undoubtedly make tedious reading, but it is not pedantic to wish to know whether the event you are reading about happened in the reign of George V. or George I. If you have such a desire, however, you will find that Mr. Pearce does not always believe in gratifying it; in the case of Mary Ashford, which included an appeal to the curious law of Wager of Battle, and hence made its date of especial interest, he is content to leave you floundering in ignorance whether the events transpired in the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th or 20th centuries! All of these three gentlemen (I am presuming that their books are really by separate writers) have been industrious authors of many similar volumes with alliterative titles: "Famous Judges and Famous Trials"; "Dark Dramas of Life," and so forth. None of theirs is a dull book, and Mr. Kingston's, in particular, contains many very readable pages. That they do not always write clearly may be seen by comparing, for example, Mr. Pearce's account of the death of the Duke of Cumberland's valet with the admirable essay on the same subject published only last year in Sir John Hall's "The Bravo Mystery and Other Cases." That their books are padded is evident when one observes that "Dramatic Days at the Old Bailey" contains a whole chapter devoted to the killing of Philip Barton Key by General Sickles in Washington, which certainly had no close connection with the Old Bailey, and that "Unsolved Murder Mysteries" wanders far enough from its title to include two or three chapters about murders which were completely solved. All of these three books contain some good grain, but a considerable amount of chaff, and the proportion of chaff is often high.

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"The Fatal Countess," of Mr. Roughead's title essay, was the Countess of Somerset, tried with her husband for the poison conspiracy which resulted in the death of Sir Thomas Overbury. It is an Elizabethan tragedy, with the evil figure of King James I, for its central character, and numerous minor demons of intriguing courtiers, beautiful and wicked women, necromancers, and others to assist. Mr. Roughead has a nice taste in villains, and James has long been a favorite. One of his earlier papers on this monarch excited the interest and praise of Henry James, and Mr. Roughead intimates that he is not through with the great Anti-Tobacconist, and scoundrel, yet. Of the other seven papers in this book, let me especially recommend "Laurel Water," a fine murder case of 1780, in which the possession of a *still* was indicative of guilt! My taste being toward the private, family murder, rather than the public one, would make me

prefer "Laurel Water" to the Countess herself, and yet the actual killing of Sir Thomas Overbury is but a part of the thing. It is the great, strange picture gallery of King James's naughty court, in the exhibition of which Mr. Roughead achieves a triumph; that and the incitement to further reading which constitute the charm of the essay. The book also includes a literary paper, on John Galt; a curious tale of forgery by a Polish physician in Scotland; "The Ambiguities of Miss Smith," an amusing and extraordinary breach-of-promise suit in the age of side-whiskers; and "The Secret of Ireland's Eye," a horrid murder on a lonely isle.

Inquiry has been made, I believe, in *The Saturday Review*, as to the best writers on actual criminal cases. Any such inquirer should be referred to Mr. Roughead's works, as he is easily the best living author in English on this subject. His introductions to the cases of Burke and Hare and of Mrs. M'Lachlan in the Notable British Trials Series are masterpieces of research and effective presentation.

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The preliminary chapter of Miss Tennyson Jesse's book is one of its best; in it she discusses the general subject sensibly and well. She classifies the motives for murder as, murder for gain, for revenge, for elimination, for jealousy, for lust of killing, and for conviction—that is, the political assassination—and gives an example of each. To those who have read of the Palmer and Neill Cream cases in the Notable British Trials Series, there is nothing new in Miss Jesse's discussion of them, nor could she hope to rival that matchless essay on the case of Constance Kent in J. B. Atlay's "Famous Trials." That was a classic murder, and Miss Jesse's fancies about what may have happened in the soul of that marvellous girl do not seem, to my old-fashioned views, to get her readers half so far as Mr. Atlay's simple narrative of events during that nocturnal crime. She does well to include Neill Cream, and she does not, like some of her compatriots, too generously award the nativity of that physician to America. (It is enough for us to have to admit responsibility for Dr. Crippen!) Americans need to know a little about people like Dr. Cream, and about the results which attended the humane action of the Governor of Illinois in releasing him from prison. Convicted, in that State, of a cruel murder by poison, he escaped the gallows for no apparent reason. Pardoned by the kind Governor after ten years, he promptly returned to his native land and began once more his pastime of murder by poison, with the result that four wretched girls died in agony. I should not like to be that Governor of Illinois!

Mr. Stevens ranges the world; America, Australia, London, Paris, and the high seas, and describes crimes of all varieties—homicides, swindling and piracy. Mr. Kingston stays nearly always within the precincts of the London courts, and mentions, not always satisfactorily, many of the important trials of the past fifty years. Mr. Pearce's cases are English, with the addition of five notorious American murders. To each of these, New York cases both, the Nathan and the Burdell, he devotes an entire chapter. These three volumes, and Miss Jesse's as well, will give entertainment on the train, or they will make additions to a club library, whose custodian wishes to have something fairly snappy, and capable of warding off slumber, for the sleepy business man. But Mr. Roughead's handsome volume is a contribution to history and literature, and both for its contents, and its superior *format*, will endure when the others are forgotten.

## THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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## Little Journeys in Manhattan

AROUND THE WORLD IN NEW YORK.

By KONRAD BERCOVICI. New York: The Century Company. 1924. \$5.00.

Reviewed by ARTHUR POUND

**H**E who would know New York city, even though he treads its streets daily, must give to the task the industry and understanding of years. He must have both the art of listening and the gift of tongues. He must be sympathetic and unprejudiced, in love with humanity for its own sake and not too concerned for its betterment. He must have the camera eye for color and line, and a heart intent on finding the thread of good in the maze of evil, likewise, a good pair of legs!

In "Around the World in New York," Konrad Bercovici proves himself as suave a traveller and as keen an interpreter as the random reader could hope to find. Not that his book registers a complete picture of New York city. That is perhaps impossible and at any rate the author's intention is rather to depict the various foreign groups in their urban environments, to show polyglot peoples reacting upon one another against the background of American civilization. So far so good; but in a book whose title is inclusive of the five boroughs, it is a decided weakness that the author so rarely leaves Manhattan, except for excursions brief to the point of insignificance, into Brooklyn and the Bronx. While Manhattan is unquestionably the most colorful of the boroughs in racial contrasts, still Brooklyn and only a little less, Queens, have their unforgettable pictures. The Brownsville section, and particularly the labor market there, are surely worth a visit to one who would plumb the great city's picturesque internationalism.

Indeed, I hunger for the day when someone will have the inspiration to write a book about Brooklyn. Now the most populous of the five boroughs, it remains to outsiders *terra incognita*. Our writing men dismiss it in satiric phrases, tritely content to describe that vast and intricate area as a place where New Yorkers go to bed nights and push perambulators Sundays. But there are scenes in Brooklyn that Manhattan cannot match. Brooklyn holds both the strident jams of Coney and the quietude of the Heights where the windows of stately houses look across the water to the storied lights of lower Manhattan. Something could be made of Brooklyn, the place where bad policemen go when they are caught, and where those poor sinners know so little of the surrounding complications that it is idle to seek street directions from them.

But if "Around the World in Manhattan" were the title of Mr. Bercovici's volume, precious little fault could be found with it. His geography is sound, his observations exact, his infrequent conclusions convincing. He is at his best, perhaps, in depicting the small group, and somewhat less successful in dealing with broad effects. One gets the impression, at first, that the author has skimped the Jews, omnipresent as they are alike in all thoroughfares and all walks of life. Then, presently, it appears that Jews are as diverse as they are multitudinous, and that the mosaic of Manhattan's vast Jewry is being built up bit by bit in the chapters devoted to their Gentile fellow-nationals. Hungarian and Roumanian Jews, one sees, continue to abide near Hungarians and Roumanians, even as they did in Europe. So that in the end the reader gets no doubt a better knowledge of Jewish life in Manhattan than could be produced by a less piecemeal method.

Those unhappy persons who think of social problems in terms of statistics, to their everlasting alarm, should read this travelogue on New York. There are plenty of things in it to confirm their suspicions of the melting pot's failure to melt; indeed, the embattled Nordics of this campaign year can find evidence enough here that New York city is not overwhelmingly American, patriotic and dry. But no one, not even a cool statistician or a hot hundred per cent, could deny, after a few hours spent with Bercovici, that these racial groups that press upon one another so closely in our greatest city are composed of intensely alive and interesting human beings, with attractive personal and social graces, some of which may help to make America more delightful as time runs on. Excepting only the Poles. Mr. Bercovici, enthusiastic about all the other sons of Shem, Ham and Japhet, lets his paean of praise drop sharply when he comes to the Poles.

## The BOWLING GREEN

### An Old House in Burgundy

**B**ETWEEN two great rivers that run almost parallel but in opposite directions, there are two hill-ranges, the Morvan and the Côte d'Or. Between these hills there is a tranquil region of upland valleys, rich in ruined castles, where the streams are uncertain whether to decant northward to the Seine, or westward to the Loire, or southeast to the Saône. The cider of Normandy, the yellow wine of Anjou, the purple of Burgundy, here balance as ultimate destiny. It is not only the watershed of France, it is the wineshed. But, however geographers may map it, there is no doubt in the region's own sentiment. It looks toward the Mediterranean and the South. When the Reds of Marseilles marched to Paris, they were nowhere more warmly welcomed than at Saulieu. From the vineyard slopes above Beaune, in clearest weather, Mont Blanc can be seen floating in the sky. So they all say, at any rate, and so Stendhal and many others have recorded, though it seems astounding: the peak must be 125 miles away. I could only see the pink roads, the same dusky pink as the inward staves of a wine-vat; and the church in Beaune that is the shape of a bottle. For when you cross that ridge of the Côte d'Or and come (through a village called Bouze) down vineyard slopes in a hot September sun, you are among the world's most famous grapes. The rapid opening and closing of the straight vistas between vine-rows, as the car spins by, makes the fields change and shimmer like twinkling silk. As you study the wine-card at the inn at Beaune you can meditate those historic names: Vol-



From "The Story of My Heart" by Richard Jefferies (Dutton)

nay, Pommard, Corton, Chambertin, Montrachet, Clos-Vougeot . . . Clos-Vougeot to whom one of Napoleon's commanders made his regiment present arms when they marched by. It was another military man (Camille Rodier's great work on *Le Vin de Bourgogne* tells the story), who always drank his burgundies in a glass cheese-bell. For it is the Burgundian theory that wine should be drunk in a vessel large enough to admit both mouth and nose simultaneously. "Ce n'est évidemment pas très élégant, mais une nouvelle série d'odeurs perçues par les fosses nasales sera le bénéfice," says Camille Rodier. The glasses set out by the inn at Beaune are not quite as wide as cheese-bells, but very nearly. I now understand more clearly how it was that Mr. Hamish Miles, a correspondent of this *Review*, three times began a letter to me, a year ago, when staying at Beaune; and three times desisted, overcome with sleep. He finished the letter a month later, in London. It was a powerful letter, and concluded by quoting the wine-card of the hotel, where you will find written: "Ce n'est pas à dire que l'amateur de Bourgogne soit toujours un homme supérieur, mais c'est un être essentiellement perfectible. C'est un humaniste, sinon en substance, du moins en puissance, car on remarquera presque toujours chez lui un souci d'élégance dans l'expression de la pensée, un amour des bonnes lettres, de l'éloquence ou des arts."

Yet it is not of wine that I intended to write, but of an old house in Burgundy; an old house lying in that valley just west of the Côte d'Or hills, deep-set in such peaceable calm, as only an inland valley can give. I should really call it a *château*, for such it is; but to the usual American connotation that word is too likely to suggest a place fantastically

ornate. I would not mar its perfect sober dignity by a misleading word.

It is curious how hard it is in words to convey the simple serenity of that old house, with its candle-snuffer towers duplicated in the broad still moat. Nervous and apprehensive as we are, there is something guilty in the way we shrink from describing peace. Dignity and serenity are the words, perhaps. In that roomy building of stone floors and great oaken beams life seems to shine as clear, as rich, as strong, as color through stained glass or through the dark wines of Aloxe and Savigny that ripen in its cellar. In every plain doorway, in every curve of stone stair or twist of ironwork or slope of mossed tile roof, there is the sense of long tranquillity, decent and friendly and kind. But there is something happier there than mere tranquillity: a feeling of renaissance, of convalescence, as of an old loveliness that had fallen into misery and decay, and now finds itself in hands that can support and re-enliven it. At the back of the fireplaces, when the blaze is going, you can see the emblem of former seigneurs: a right hand, lifted open, palm outward. A Glad Hand, we can call it, emblem of a beautiful name, Suremain de Saiserey, which sounds as though it meant something like A Sure Hand to Hold. But the surest hand may relax when there are no heirs to carry on.

Sometimes Americans seem the appointed lovers and custodians of European secrets: there was some strange blessing at work when (armed only with a postcard photo from which the name had been cut off) my friend the Caliph ferreted out this old house—which the owners were prepared to sell piece-meal and where poultry was kept in cages on the big stone stair. Looking across the moat on moonlit evenings, where the shadow of thirteenth century towers lay black-pointed on the meadow, there was no sound except the splash of wakeful carp. Sitting by candle-light to study eighteenth century vellum-bound account-books (there was a cowhide trunk full of old records of the house) or hunting up the story of the romantic young poet who loved the chateau and ran away from home to fight for Poland and died young; or admiring the portrait of the Duchesse de Foix, in a scarlet gown and green-gold mantle, gayly holding a tiny black mask, one knew the old house to be very much alive.

Who shall explain what miracle it is that happens when a man finds just that angle of earth that smiles particularly for him? In the Caliph's face as he ponders the stone facets of his moat-balustrade, or the hipped gables of his farm buildings, or the curved steps that lead down to his bowling green, or the arch of his alley of lime-trees, I see the look of a man at peace with life. Architect by profession, his two or three months a year in this Burgundian retreat are certainly no mere vacancy, but a devotion to the bottom principles and honors of his art; from which he takes back, to his office in an American city, freshened notions of that marriage of Place and Time that we call architecture. And what delightful ironies in the situation, he chuckles. Is it not amusing, he says, that a Scotch-American presbyterian, brought up to believe (almost) that Papists have horns and hoofs, finds himself seigneur of a Catholic hamlet, with a chapel in his own grounds and a village church under his windows where he must provide for sixty-some masses a year to be performed for his house's ancestors? How is it, he asks, that he feels more at home here than anywhere else in the world—here where he doesn't even understand their language? Like the wise man he is, he says very little, to casual acquaintances at home, about the house where the welcoming hand shines on the chimneyback. Evasive magic comes to pass when a man's heart takes root, for a few months a year, in a life that is strangely different from his own and yet also strangely blended. It is no mean lesson to have lived, even for a week only, in that old house. One brings away more than memories of licheny stonework rising from a clear mirror of water: a sense that the art of living has sometimes (and can again) triumph over muddle and distraction; that (as the humorous wine-card has it) a lover of these things might even be "an essentially perfectible being." It will be pleasant for the Caliph to think sometimes, in the subway, that a cask of Corton 1919 (the same that we sampled, from a silver tasting-cup, in the dark vaults under a Côte d'Or hillside) is ripening all the long winter months in the cellar beneath the chateau. He carries the meaning and destiny of that old house deep settled in his mind, like a bottle of good wine.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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## Books of Special Interest

### Jungle Travels

THE RIVER OF SEVEN STARS. By ARTHUR O. FRIEL. New York: Harper & Bros. 1924. \$3.50.

Reviewed by KERMIT ROOSEVELT

MR. FRIEL in this book has provided a very real contribution to the literature of South American exploration. Turbulent Venezuela is the scene of his voyaging.

To most of us as boys the Amazon and the Orinoco were rivers of magic and names to conjure by. It is a curious fact that geographic knowledge of the upper Orinoco and its tributaries has declined rather than increased in the last two centuries. The descendants of the old conquistadores with the lure of the fabled golden city to urge them on, forced their way up the rivers and through the jungles. The Jesuit Missionaries followed in their wake. At length the oppressed Indian asserted himself and the soldiers and priests who were not massacred withdrew from the field. The jungle claimed its own so completely that nothing remains of the old blockhouses to tell of their existence.

Before the introduction of rubber to the Straits Settlements and its wholesale cultivation there and in the Dutch East Indies, the Orinoco shared with the Amazon the frenzied prosperity brought on by the demand for the "black gold." Both rivers are now suffering from the stagnation that set in when the boom collapsed through the competition of cultivated rubber. The prize must be great that can attract settlers and workers to brave the climate, and the insect pests, and the dangers of river navigation.

Mr. Friel writes at length, and in somewhat too melodramatic fashion about the reign of terror of one Tomas Funes who depopulated the upper Orinoco from May, 1913, until his murder in January, 1921. Leo Miller who was with my father and myself in Brazil tells in the account of his expedition up the Orinoco how nearly he came to being a witness and possibly a victim of the massacre with which Funes inaugurated his career as Up-river tyrant. Miller was provided with a canoe, and secretly advised to leave town immediately. He got away just before Funes's attack. Miller gives a somewhat different picture of the régime which proceeded Funes's. From his account it would appear to have been a case of "dog eat dog," and the exchanging of one tyrannical oppressive rule for another.

The greatest interest in Mr. Friel's narrative naturally centers around his ascent of the Venturi river, an unmapped and little known affluent of the Orinoco. The hardships of the trip cannot be fully appreciated by anyone who has not actually experienced the discomfort and torture of insect life and the constant exposure to existence among the myriad plagues of rain and sun without adequate protection or sufficient food. It is to be regretted that Mr. Friel was not equipped to give his experiences a greater scientific value. In the foreword he emphasizes the point that he was travelling for no other reason than the pursuit of adventure, and says that such a traveller can better impartially judge a country than anyone who has a monetary reward of some sort for his labors. This would seem a difficult point to uphold. The naturalist or hunter or prospector has rarely any bias emanating from his calling; the greatest bias is usually to be traced to the individual personality of the author.

Mr. Friel is very evidently experienced in photography. The illustrations are excellently chosen and should well repay him for the weary hours spent in taking and preserving them. The book may be summed up as the account of a very creditable performance, creditably placed before the public.

### Calvin the Silent

THE LIFE OF CALVIN COOLIDGE. By HORACE GREEN. New York: Duffield & Co. 1924. \$2.50.

Reviewed by BRITON HADDEN

THERE seems to be no great unanimity of opinion about President Coolidge. Says Mencken: "A puerile and a hollow fellow." Says the *New York World*: "A little man unable to make up his mind, unable to lead and very nervous about votes." Says Frank W. Stearns: "When I read about Hamilton, I think Coolidge knows even more about finance than did the Great Alexander. . . . I was reading Benjamin Franklin last week and I thought to myself: 'How much Coolidge resembles Franklin!'"

Though Mr. Green inclines toward the Stearns viewpoint, he is—for most part—dispassionate enough. His most unprejudiced statement is: "Had it not been for the police strike. . . . Coolidge might have remained a mediocre State Senator." His most blatant: "While the others [at school] raced in from tag or prisoner's base, Coolidge was in his seat reading."

It is patent enough that the biographer has never been in actual contact with the object of his discourse. Such facts and anecdotes as he has strung together have been culled from "expansive, kindly" Frank W. Stearns; from personal observation in and around Plymouth, Northampton, Boston; from other biographies (notably Whiting's, Washburn's and the Coolidge anecdotes written for *The World* by Oliver H. P. Garrett).

\* \* \*

To the casual student of Coolidge, the most valuable chapter in Mr. Green's volume is the one on the Boston Police strike. Your casual student has read *The Nation's* account of how "Governor Coolidge sat discreetly on the fence until he saw on which side public sentiment was gathering. . . . Then [after the rioting had been quelled] climbed down on the side with the crowd and issued a bombastic proclamation needlessly mobilizing the state guard." Is *The Nation* to be believed? Not if you believe Mr. Green. It seems that Governor Coolidge refused, during the rioting, to break the strike with the militia because Police Commissioner Curtis kept repeating: "I have the situation well in hand." After the strikers were beaten, it became the Governor's function to see to it that they (1,100 of them) be not allowed back again on the force. This he did by crystallizing public opinion against them. He crystallized it by means of his proclamation (that was its sole purpose) and with public letters to Samuel Gompers ("There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, at any time.") In short, Mr. Green endeavors to prove that if Coolidge climbed down from the fence on the side with the crowd, he himself marshalled the crowd there at the exact moment he was climbing down.

Mr. Green, political writer, is neither a scholar (like the late Alfred Henry Lewis) nor a spiceman (like Clinton W. Gilbert). His humor is elephantine. Perhaps the nearest approach to an honest laugh in the entire 263 pages is an account of a White House visitor who rushed up to Brigadier General Sawyer exclaiming: "How do you do, Senator Lodge?"

It must be said "The Life of Calvin Coolidge" is an inconsequential volume. If Mr. Coolidge is reelected, then another and more complete life will be necessary. (Published 1928). If Mr. Coolidge is not reelected, then his final chapter is done, his book is closed, this volume will do as well as another.

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## Books of Special Interest

### Political Theories

A DEFENSE OF LIBERTY AGAINST TYRANTS. A translation of the *Vindictæ contra Tyrannos* by JUNIUS BRUTUS. With an historical introduction by Harold J. Laski. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1924.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

SPECIALISTS in the history of political theories will doubtless be grateful for this attractive edition of a work which, while totally devoid of practical interest or value for the modern world, was not without influence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The "Vindictæ contra Tyrannos," apparently the production of Duplessis-Mornay, counselor of Henry IV. of France, was published in or about 1579, and two years later was translated from its original Latin into French. The English version which Mr. Laski has reproduced was printed at London in 1689. The book is a discussion of four questions, first, "whether subjects are bound and ought to obey princes, if they command that which is against the law of God"; second, "whether it be lawful to resist a prince which doth infringe the law of God, or ruin the church, by whom, how, and how far it is lawful"; third, "whether it be lawful to resist a prince which doth oppress or ruin a public state and how far such resistance may be extended, by whom, how, and by what right or law it is permitted"; and fourth, "whether neighbor princes or states may be or are bound by law to give succor to the subjects of other princes afflicted for the cause of true religion, or oppressed by manifest tyranny." To the substantive parts of each of these questions the answers are affirmative, and what is said about the secondary issues is of a piece with what is said about the main ones. The book should be easy reading if it were today readable at all, since anyone who has read the title page and the first half-dozen pages of text can hardly fail to see the end from the beginning.

Historically, of course, the discussion is related to the struggle against arbitrary royal power on the one hand and the all-embracing claims of the Church on the other which the Protestant revolt accentuated, and in general to the whole controversy over the divine right of kings of which France and England afford the most conspicuous examples. It thus links itself with the sixteenth century struggle of Protestantism for political recognition and supremacy, and with the beginnings of a democratic movement whose aim, attained with only moderate success, was to put kings in leading-strings and subject them to something suggestive of popular control. That the book should ever, on the other hand, have had a modicum of human interest even in its own day is explicable only by remembering how deadening was the blight which theology and ecclesiasticism long fastened upon the human mind, and how difficult it long was for men of affairs to see the obvious or to champion it boldly once it was perceived. The wearisome appeals to scripture to prove that God is greater than a king and that tyranny does not go well with divine favor, joined to the iteration of ethical platitudes over which it is hard to believe there could ever have been dispute, are juiceless nutriment for citizen or politician in this profane and practical age. A certain literary skill there undoubtedly is, as there must be when the intellectual content is small, but the pervading bondage to tradition which the work reveals makes one marvel that modern constitutionalism could have sprung from so dry a source.

Mr. Laski, whose scholarship is at its best when the evolution of outgrown political ideas is to be traced, seems to be clear that the "Vindictæ" played a large part in the resistance of the Huguenots to Catholic oppression and should be accounted an important factor in the democratic movement of English Puritanism. To the extent that Huguenot or Puritan leaders knew of the book and repeated its arguments the contention may be conceded, for original and translations ran to eight editions in the course of a century, and those of 1648, 1660 and 1689 suggest their occasion in the political crises of those years. Whether the work had any effect whatever upon popular thought is quite another matter. There have been numerous editions of Machiavelli's "Prince," and the conduct of many a ruler has been on all fours with the precepts of that unblushing work, but we may not therefore conclude that every conscienceless ruler must have

read Machiavelli. The evolution of democracy, in the very imperfect form in which alone it has yet emerged, is mainly in the struggle of the unnamed and largely unlettered masses against embodied superstition and convention—a struggle in which economic interest has fought to break the grip of politics and the only recognized will of God has been the greatest good of the greatest number. With such an evolution the upper-class democracy which Du-Plessis-Mornay envisages has nothing in common, and it is only as a register of a stage of progress from the divine right of a king to the divine right of a class that his book is worthy of remembrance.

### Employee Organizations

THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN A GOVERNMENT INDUSTRY. By STERLING DENHERD SPERO. Doran. 1924. \$2.

Reviewed by WINTHROP D. LANKE

WHEN Herodotus wrote, of some messengers of ancient times, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds," he could not have foreseen that some one would spread his words, a block long, over the front of the New York post office building. Placed there, the tribute has a novel touch of the heroic. To the post office clerk drudging overhours and the mail carrier trying to raise a family on his small government pay, the words may seem a bit irrelevant; these men, like most of us, are interested in what they get out of their work. Mr. Spero analyzes the arguments against employee organization in the government service. It is widely held that employees of the state should not be allowed to form labor organizations because they owe their governmental employer a special obligation of loyalty, and that for them to agitate their grievances by methods commonly used by others is little short of treason. Mr. Spero points out that every government employee owes the same duties of citizenship as every other citizen, but he asks whether, in respect to most civil service, which is administrative or of a kind very much like that done for private employers, any special advantage should be taken by the state of its accidental position as employer; most men and women who work for it do not do so out of special desire or allegiance, he thinks, but in order to earn their livings.

Again, he protests against the common notion that work for the state is necessarily more important than work for private employers. Suppose all the employees of the Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor should go on strike. Would that cause more harm than a suspension of coal mining, which would make homes cold? Or suppose that municipal street cleaners should go on strike. Would dirty streets for a while be more of a menace than suddenly shutting off the milk supply of babies, hospitals and other persons, which would result from a strike of the employees of private milk companies? Doubtless teachers could go on strike and close the schools for two weeks with less harm than the sudden shutting down of a city's privately operated water system. In some cities things are done privately that are done publicly in others, such as street cleaning and providing water. Is any more damage done by a strike when the men work for the city than when they work for a private employer? Logically, the matter can be carried farther. Of what value is it to prohibit a strike by the employees of a municipal gas plant, when coal miners are allowed to strike and they can shut the gas plant down by cutting off its supply of coal? The strike is bad enough and ought to be avoided, but Mr. Spero thinks that the public reasoning in the matter is blanketed by fog. He points out that in Europe public employee organization is taken very much for granted.

Employee organizations have been very active in the postal service, which is the largest single employer of labor in this country, if not in the world. These organizations have sought their objects by direct dealing with the administrative chiefs and by bringing pressure to bear upon Congress for legislation helpful to them. They have attempted to influence Congress by lobbying, appearing before committees and by publicity. Mr. Spero reviews early working conditions in the postal service, the rise of the postal organizations, the effect of former Postmaster General Burleson's opposition to employee organizations, and discusses the prospect for closer cooperation among postal organizations.



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## The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

### Art

- BRIDGMAN'S LIFE DRAWING. By GEORGE B. BRIDGMAN. Pelham, N. Y.: Edward C. Bridgman.
- THE ARTIST'S LONDON. As Seen in Eighty Contemporary Pictures. Stokes. \$10.
- FAIRY SCULPTORS OF AMERICA. By J. WALKER MCSPADDEN. Dodd, Mead. \$3.50.
- A HISTORY OF FRENCH ETCHING. By F. L. LEIPNIK. Dodd, Mead. \$12.50.
- THE DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH FURNITURE. Vol. I. By PERCY MACQUOID and RALPH EDWARDS. Scribner. \$35.

### Belles Lettres

- BLAKE AND MILTON. By DENIS SAURAT. Dial Press. 1924. \$2.00. This study of two English poets, by the Director of the French Institute of the United Kingdom, carries the imprint of a Bordeaux press, betrays in idiom and typography many traces of its French origin, and in structure and content reveals even more definitely its nationality. It piles up comparisons and contracts unweariedly, following a precise outline with intellectual fervor. It probes sharply and confidently into temperament and environment, cause and effect. In the end it achieves a surprising catalogue of likenesses and differences between Milton and Blake, including various hitherto unnoticed parallels.

Dr. Saurat, in what he says of Milton, refers chiefly to Milton's own clear text and to Masson. He is not so fortunate in the sources of his material on Blake. It is unfortunate that he could not have seen Mr. Foster Damon's recent book on Blake for the insight it would have given him into Blake's philosophy and symbols. It is equally unfortunate that he had not seen Mr. Geoffrey Keynes's "Bibliography of Blake," so much more exhaustive and helpful than Mr. Conner's which he calls "complete." It is even more unfortunate, since in Dr. Saurat's theory details of Blake's life often explain details of his work, that he should have relied apparently implicitly on a biographer of Blake so irascible and naïve as E. J. Ellis.

AUBREY BEARDSLEY AND OTHER MEN OF THE NINETIES. By JOSÉPH PENNELL. Philadelphia: Pennell Club. 1924. \$15.

Volume three of the Pennell Club series following "The Gardens of Aphrodite" by Edgar Saltus, and "An Heiress on Condition" by George Gissing, purports to be about Aubrey Beardsley and some of his contemporaries. In reality it is about Joseph Pennell.

The author laments the losses sustained during the recent war; laments that a football match should attract a larger crowd (of "oafs") than would an art exhibit; recollects various interesting personages of the late eighties and early nineties whose genius he was among the first to recognize, and sadly, albeit chattily, caresses those names famous in the last generation, some of whom are remembered today: Kipling, Whistler, Stevenson, R. A. M. not R. L., Ruskin, Gosse, the Pre-Raphaelites. Then comes Beardsley. The reminiscences are personal in the extreme and for that reason they hold the reader's attention. A note at the foot of Page 18 reads:

(Continued on next page)

At the close of the Brooklyn Beardsley Exhibition an attempt was made to send the drawings to public art galleries; but few would take them—what they want is American art—which is mostly artless.

Nothing of any great value to the student of Beardsleyana is contributed by this volume. The reading of it gives some information about Joseph Pennell, however. The whole impression is of intolerance for things American, modern. It is a jeremiad by one of the old generation for days that are gone, alas, forever.

The format is delightful. Yellow to suggest the "Yellow Book," the cover is pleasing to the eye. The title page is decorated with an artistic vignette by the author. Opposite, is reproduced a drawing of Raphael Sanzio by Beardsley from the collection of William West, hitherto unpublished. Forty-five pages with wide margins contain the text which was first delivered as a lecture at the Brooklyn Museum of Science and Art on the occasion of the Beardsley Exhibition, November, 1923. This edition comprises one hundred numbered copies.

ESSAYS ON JEWISH LIFE AND THOUGHT. The Letters of Benammi: Second Series. Longmans, Green. \$3.50 net.

THE MEDIEVAL SOCIETY ROMANCES. By SARAH F. BARROW. Columbia University Press. \$2.50.

A MOST FRIENDLY FAREWELL TO SIR FRANCIS DRAKE. By HENRY ROBERTS. Transcribed by E. M. BLACKIE. Harvard University Press.

CARGOES FOR CRUSOES. By GRANT OVERTON. Appleton: Doran: Little, Brown.

A SHEAF OF PAPERS. By OLIVER ELTON. Small, Maynard. \$.50 net.

### Drama

AN INDEX TO ONE-ACT PLAYS.

Compiled by HANNAH LOGASA and WINIFRED VER NOOT. Boston: Faxon. 1924.

The almost disarming statement that "although the index is not complete, it is comprehensive and serviceable" brings up the question of how incomplete a bibliography can be and still be comprehensive. In listing 5,000 ubiquitous and fugitive one-act plays omissions may be expected. But such omissions! The harassed program-builder searches in vain for such memorable plays as Pendleton King's "Cocaine," Miles Malleson's "Black 'Ell;" Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Not Smart" and "The Giant's Stair." Nor is there any mention of the permanent record of the Provincetown Players and to collect data on the productions of Stuart Walker's Portmanteau Theatre a search must be made of the entire work. Admirable collections such as the "Atlantic Book of Modern Plays" and Harry Kemp's "Boccaccio's Untold Tale and Other Plays" are missing. Through poor proof-reading George Cronyn's "A Death in Fever Heat," Philip Moeller's "Sisters of Susannah" becomes "Sister Susamiah" and Gustav Wied is Americanized to Wild. As one goes on the errors and omissions become more alarming and mysterious. All these detract from the serviceability of the index. In no manner, save that of bulk, does the present work supersede those manuals already on the market.

(Continued on next page)

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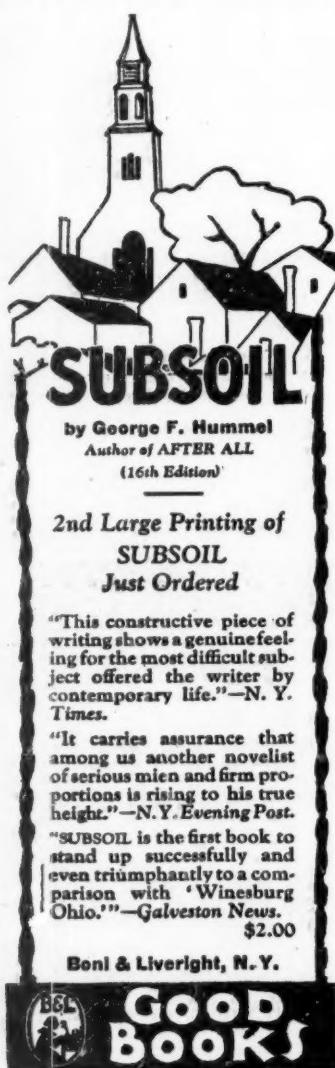
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## The New Books

### Drama

(Continued from preceding page)

ONE-ACT PLAYS OF TODAY. Selected by J. W. MARRIOTT. Small, Maynard. 1924.

Whether as a collection for the general reader or as a text-book for high school pupils, this volume offers little that is new. It duplicates authors and plays of the textbook by Helen Louise Cohen, though it contains five plays less than her volume, with fewer and feeble notes. The plays themselves, mainly old favorites, are of diverse types, ranging from Arnold Bennett's farce, "The Stepmother," to Ophelia Down's phantasy, "The Maker of Dreams," or to the horror of Dunsany's "A Night at an Inn." Lawrence Housman and A. A. Milne might have been represented by happier selections; but it was a good thought to include, in what is primarily a textbook, Olive Conway's Thackerayian playlet, "Becky Sharp."

Mr. Marriott's notes betray him as without close contact with the drama. He states that the dramatist today "must either set his standard so low that he despises his own work, or he must console himself with the very faint applause of posterity." This summary disposal of Shaw, Galsworthy, and the host, is made as part of the evidence as to the necessity of education in drama. To help the learning process, the editor, without defining drama (though implying the distinctions used for Shakespeare's plays), divides it "into three classes, namely, comedy, tragedy, and grand opera." Thereafter he refers to light comedy, farce, and other types of play, without further clarification. Such incoherencies render the book valuable only for one who confines himself to the plays themselves, and spell confusion for the student who seeks guidance.

REPRESENTATIVE PLAYS. By JOHN GALSWORTHY. Scribner. \$1.60.

THE DESIRE FOR CHANGE. By FRANCIS NEILSON. Huebsch. \$1.50.

A MIXED FOURSONG. By FRANCIS NEILSON. Huebsch. \$1.50.

THE IMPOSSIBLE PHILANTHROPIST. By FRANCIS NEILSON. Huebsch. \$1.50.

### Fiction

THE RED THUMB MARK. By R. CHESTER FREEMAN. Dodd, Mead. 1924. \$2.00.

A parcel of diamonds valued at \$30,000 has been stolen from a certain dealer in jewels. His nephew, a young man of irreproachable character is suspect. Very simple and convincing is the pledge of his guilt scored in the whorls of a red thumbprint found in the safe after the gems are gone. The case for the prosecution rests on a familiar legal definition: "A complete accordance between two prints of a single finger affords evidence requiring no corroboration that the persons from whom they were made are the same." Yet Anstey, King's counsel, Thorndyke, astute medico-legal practitioner, and Jervis, who narrates the tale, undertake to prove this formula a fallacy—and do. Solemnly, in gown and periwig, they execute an astounding series of deductive acrobatics, swing the prisoner safely through the fiery hoop of suspicion, establishing his innocence, and unseating the readers forever.

That quaint device, the "Thumbograph," figures largely in this story as does also a mysterious gentleman, X, who shoots unvenomed hypodermics out of cartridges, makes cigars into bombs, and performs other curious sleights well contrived to amaze and entertain. The thread of the tale is led forward in dialogue; incredible schemes are dissected, outlandish happenings discussed in scholarly conversations, ruffled now and then by turns of a clipped formal humor, as if a company of barristers, all slightly mad, were plotting some outrageous schoolboy mummery over their claret. Excellent, however, is the trial scene with which the narrative ends. It could only have been written by one who is, like Mr. Freeman, thoroughly versed in the law. This scene abounds in the technical knowledge which, with considerable acute observation of human character, distinguishes the work, and transforms it from a thriller into a book.

MORRY. By ROBERT ELSON. Small, Maynard. 1924. \$2.00.

Mr. Elson's previous book, "Maxa," marked him as a newcomer of definite individuality among the British novelists. It had a tang. This second story is even more out of the ordinary, especially in its mechanism and its unshackled point of view. But there is no eccentricity: no

straining for effect, and Mr. Elson's style is always well modulated. The construction of this novel belongs to a form that is often dangerous: it is built up of a series of more or less detachable episodes, each one almost a complete unit in itself. That generally leads to mere repetition, but here it does not for the effect is cumulative, and each chapter adds something new to the growing aggregate. That total is the full length—perhaps even more than life size—portrait of an Anglo-Jewish lawyer, both as lawyer and as a man. It impresses one as an idealization from some actually known and admired model. "Morry's" career is followed from birth to middle age, but the narrative leaves him, as it were, up in the air, with no artificial finality of climax. It is more than implied that he will go on careering.

There are two main threads in the pattern. First, the "sense of ideal justice," and second, Morry's chivalrous, if mistaken sacrifice for his friend, the narrator, which leads him to give up the girl he loves because he thinks that friend desires her. The bulk of the story is given to illustrations of the first element, given concretely in reports of trials and other professional activities. It begins with a murder trial—which would easily have made a full sized mystery yarn in itself; each of these cases is fully treated, most of them being excellent short stories, dramatic episodes that could stand alone. Yet they all bring out some phase of Morry's noble character or of his extraordinary intellectual keenness. The movement never drags. The minor characters are also carefully done, although they are always kept subordinate to the heroic figure of the lawyer.

GREEN THURSDAY. By JULIA PETER-KIN. Knopf. 1924. \$2.50.

Comedy and tragedy play intermittently through the pages of these stories and sketches of negro life. The author is one who evidently knows the Negro from close and intimate experience, and she appears to catch the dominant mood of his life and character, his essential cheerfulness, his kindliness, his superstitions, his whims and caprices and queer imaginings and the hardships and the pathos that may underlie his seemingly untroubled existence. All of the pieces making up "Green Thursday" have their setting on the same plantation, and all are concerned with the same general set of characters, though the connection between the various tales is of the slightest and most casual; and in all of the stories the author displays the same sympathetic understanding of negro psychology, the same knowledge of his moods and dialect, the same acquaintance with his peculiar problems and conditions of life. Although the author does not always manifest a mastery of the mechanics of writing and although she has a habit of irritating the reader by her jerky, staccato sentences, yet she has such control of her subject-matter that in several of the stories, and notably in the one from which the book takes its title, she achieves that genuine and compelling emotional effect which is one of the tests of good story-telling.

THE PASSIONATE QUEST. By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM. Little, Brown. 1924. \$2.00.

The acknowledged master of the continental-intrigue thriller attempts to succeed in the early manner of Compton Mackenzie. A young man comes to London to succeed as a writer, a girl to succeed on the stage. They both win to their reward, which is naturally each other, after the usual personal and impersonal obstacles. In fact, the only individual who does not succeed in "The Passionate Quest" is Mr. Oppenheim, whose *flair* for the fierce, white light that beats about the Casino of Monte Carlo is both garish and inadequate to his present subject. "The Passionate Quest," despite its arcadian theme, is more like "The Great Impersonation" than it is like "Sylvia Scarlet," and more like a failure than either of these two excellent books.

THE KING OF ELFLAND'S DAUGHTER. By LORD DUNSANY. Putnam. 1924.

One thanks whatever gods there be for an occasional Dunsany even though one might not have cause for thanks were the Dunsanys more than occasional. Amid the unremitting deluge of hyper-realistic fiction, the magic-haunted plays and romantic stories of Dunsany are like fresh breezes from the heights, telling of things not of the earth and creating a dream-world wherein the sordid cares and the tangible concerns of everyday vanish like thin mist.

This is particularly true of Dunsany's latest work, which is perhaps as authentic (Continued on page 188)

## Speaking of Books

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# Foreign Literature

## Old Russia

VOSPOMINANIA . . . (REMINISCENCES: FROM THE SERFDOM TO THE BOLSHEVIKS). By Baron N. VRANGEL. Berlin: Slovo Pub. Co. 1924.  
MOI VOSPOMINANIA . . . (MY REMINISCENCES: FATHERLAND; LAURELS; TRAVELLINGS). By Prince S. VOLKONSKY. Berlin: Miedny Vsadnik Publ. Co. 2 Vols.  
Reviewed by ALEXANDER I. NAZAROFF

If the contemporary Russian fiction is still at the crossroads suffering of wounds imposed upon it by the revolution and showing but few signs of recovery, the Russian memoires-literature has been, and is being, enriched by a number of exceptionally valuable works. Of them two books stand out: the reminiscences by the late Baron N. Vrangel (a remote relative of the "White General") and by Prince S. Volkonsky. Though belonging to Russia's leading aristocratic families, these authors played in the old Russia no political rôle to speak of. The scope of their books is much wider than official history. It is Russian life in all its complicated and colorful variety for the last fifty years.

Baron Vrangel's reminiscences embrace even a wider period: he spent the first fourteen years of his seventy during the epoch of serfdom and the last years, until his escape to Finland, under the Bolsheviks in Soviet Russia. An intimate knowledge of Russia's ruling class and of Russia in general, a life exceptionally interesting and colorful, and rich in associations which ranged from Grand Dukes to village thieves, a brilliant memory and a remarkable gift of observation and recording lend to Baron Vrangel's book a high interest.

Especially interesting are the Baron's reminiscences of childhood. The portrait gallery of the landlord-neighbors of his father glimmers with genuine and typical figures. Here is, for instance, an anachronism characteristic of the Russian life, a "good landlord" who by mistake got into the nineteenth instead of the eighteenth century.

He called himself an atheist; while alive he ordered for himself a tombstone bearing the inscription: "Let God, if he exists, forgive my soul, if it exists." Voltaire was his God. Encyclopædist his Bible. He brought up his children in accordance with Rousseau's principles. As to physical punishments for his serfs, he considered them harmful. "Peasants and servants," he used to say, "should be improved by the good moral influence instead of being punished." Therefore his house reminded one of a zoo: serfs walked about in it with red paper tongues bearing the inscription "Liar" and attached to the neck, in hats with donkey's ears, with the inscription "Thief" on the breast, etc.

There are in this portrait gallery also other types, from mild, good-natured dreamers drawn with a genuine sense of humor to phantastically inclined iron despots. On the whole, Baron Vrangel remembers the time of serfdom as a heavy nightmare, and, as a liberal, finds many faults with the Imperial Russia of the later periods. So does also Prince Volkonsky, who, however, does not devote to these questions so much attention as his fellow-author.

But the bitterer the criticism the stronger is the feeling one gets from the reading of these two books: however antiquated, obsolete and reprehensible may seem to have been certain institutions of old Russia, the cultural level of its upper class was unusually high. One is fascinated by Volkonsky's friends, men of his class and society: one of them is a brilliant musician, another (Mr. Sooman) an unsurpassed translator of Dante's "Divina Commedia," another still a serious student of the Orient, etc. Volkonsky himself is one of the best contemporary Russian essayists and art critics and director of the Imperial Theaters to which Russian art is greatly indebted. One does not happen often to read books like his: the story of his life, the characteristics of artists, monarchs, musicians, writers whom he met, the description of his numberless travellings are blended with meditations and thoughts with such unfailing aesthetic tact and told in such an impeccable style (which is very rare in contemporary Russian literature) that the reader enjoys and admires every page of his book.

On some occasion or other Prince Volkonsky tells you, *en passant*, the story of a *nouveau-riche* who, admiring the lawn in an English park, complained to the gardener that he could not succeed in having his lawn fixed in the same way. "There is nothing simpler than that," answered the

gardner; "have it ploughed, sown and, when the grass comes up, have it trimmed twice a week and watered twice a day. After three hundred years you will also have a good lawn." Yes, this is culture." And this is also Prince Volkonsky's book. And it is a great relief for one living in the days of standardized and commercialized literature to spend a few hours on the lawns that had been cultivated in the older days under the régime of the "unspeakable" Russian aristocracy. This applies to both books reviewed in the present article, but especially to that of Prince Volkonsky, for it is not an exaggeration to say that the history of the Russian literature and music of the nineteenth century passed through Volkonsky's house: from Pushkin and Tchaikovsky to Turgeneff, Russia's best writers were friends of his family, numerous evidences of which fact are scattered in this refreshing and fragrant book.

## A German on Espionage

GEHEIME MÄCHTE. Internationale Spionage und ihre Bekämpfung im Weltkrieg und Heute. Von OBERST W. NICOLAI. Leipzig: R. F. Kochler. 1924.

Reviewed by THOMAS J. C. MARTYN

ESPIONAGE, pandering to the inherent curiosity of humanity, is ever an absorbing subject. An ambassador may be a whole corps of spies rolled into one, but at least something will be known of him and his methods. A spy usually has a single object in view and little or nothing is known of him by the public. Intelligence Services are not communicative; thus, while the functions of espionage are defined, its methods are relatively unknown. This is a pungent reason why "Geheime Mächte" must be viewed from a general rather than a particular point of view.

It is necessary to understand before reading this book—the author does not bring up the point—that in Germany there are three secret services, one naval, one civil, and one military. It is with the latter that Colonel Nicolai is throughout concerned. Immediately after the Armistice he was accused of failure and as a rebuttal wrote "Nachrichtendienst, Presse und Volksstimung im Weltkrieg," a summary of his work and his attempts to control the press and to influence public opinion. His present book is a continuation of his defence and an argument for funds to carry on what he conceives to be the vitally necessary work of a military espionage. He claims that, although German military intelligence was of a low order during the earlier part of the war, adverse criticism of its efficiency in the latter part cannot be sustained. Certainly, the reviewer remembers, when in command of an Air Force unit in France, one machine was reported "missing." Months after the observer described his inquisition before the German intelligence officers. A long list of questions was fired at him, none of which he would answer. Finally, to obtain his confidence, they told him the location of his squadron and the name of his commanding officer. Finding that the Germans knew so much the young observer was trapped into answering further questions, which may or may not have been of importance.

The reader is also treated to a long review of foreign secret services and spies. A great deal of it exists only in the imagination of the author. He says that Germany spent too little money on intelligence before the war and that she never conducted espionage in either France or England. He means, of course, military espionage; for the German naval intelligence service probably was, and is now, the best in the world next to the Russian "Ochrana." France is viewed in collusion with Russia. England, he says, has an expensive espionage system with headquarters at The Hague. This no doubt will be news to the British War Office. The United States intelligence Service concerns itself with propaganda and "thereby renounced all claim to (conducting) an intelligence service proper." Today, it is not France and Russia but France and Poland.

There is ample evidence to show that Russia and France have always maintained intricate systems of espionage. Russia in particular was an inveterate sinner. It may even be said that the "Ochrana's" influence abroad was such that any power might well be excused for making it alone a *casus belli*. France was not much better. Germany, however inefficient in military espionage, and after all there is not much scope for military intelligence in peace time, was not far behind her competitors; for the naval

service worked for the Fatherland and not solely for itself. The civil intelligence service was occupied with counter-espionage and so efficiently did it do its work that it is hard to believe that the German police actually aided Russian spies, as Colonel Nicolai says they did. That, however, does not nullify the premise, rather does it compliment the Russians on the perfection of their secret service.

Whatever may be the importance of this book, and it would seem not to be excessive, it is certainly interesting. A concrete idea is given of the training necessary to make a German intelligence officer, of the difficulties of the past in carrying out secret service work abroad, and of the present time when Germans are willing, because of poverty, to sell information to the "enemy." The reader will, nevertheless, do well to remember that no one is ever frank about espionage and to keep in mind Hegel's advice and believe that *was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich; und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig*.

## Foreign Notes

WILHELM VON BODE, who some years ago published what was virtually a pioneer study of the Flemish artist, Brouwer, has now followed that earlier work with a second volume which its predecessor, is a lucid and discriminating discussion of the work of the painter of peasant life, "Adriaen Brouwer, Sein Leben und Seine Werke" (Berlin: Euphonion Verlag) presents a summary of biographical data and classifies and analyzes the artist's pictures. The book is well written and should be of interest to layman and student alike.

The fifth volume of a series presenting Spanish poetry of popular origin entitled "La Verdadera Poesia Castellana" (Madrid: Revista de Archivos) has recently made its appearance. This "Historia Critica de la Antigua Lirica Popular," by Julio Cejador, summarizes the history of Spanish poetry insofar as it represents the anonymous contributions that spring from the people.

A curious and valuable book has just been published in Germany (Berlin: Ro-

woblt) entitled "Verbotene Literatur, Von der Klassischen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart." The volume, by H. H. Houben, contains over 600 pages and gives in alphabetical order a mass of facts bearing on German writers from Berthold Auerbach to Lu-dolf Wienberg.

The Insel Verlag of Leipsic proposes to publish a translation of Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" in the Biblioteca Mundia, comprising the masterpieces of the world's literature. Strange to say, "Moby Dick" has never been translated into German, though two other of Melville's books were published in Germany as early as 1850.

Albert Flament's new novel, "Créve-Cœur" (Paris: Michel), the story of a brief and tragic love passage, is a book of considerable power, well constructed, written with distinction and dramatic in content. The book contains some vivid and powerful portrayals of Bretagne peasantry and of the scenery of Brittany.

One of the first films to come out of Soviet Russia is the picturization of a novel by Tolstoy, "Polikuchka," which has recently been presented in France. Though somewhat crude in technique, the picture is said to have a powerful and moving appeal.

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Rudyard Kipling has rearranged the contents of his two "Jungle Books" for a new edition in one volume, which will be published this autumn in England. The rearrangement enables all the Mowgli stories—eight in number—to be brought together in one group, followed by the seven miscellaneous tales which complete the volume.

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# Rainer Maria Rilke

BY PIERRE LOVING

**A**BOUT twenty-five years ago Rainer Maria Rilke sprang fully caparisoned into public notice as a German poet. He came as near perfection through refinement as the natural obduracy of the German language would permit. Coupled with this refinement was a delicacy of feeling which played upon the surface of human emotions scarcely ever probing to the live nerves beneath. His method was that of the sculptor, carving the raw language as if it were unshewn stone. Small wonder then that he should now seek a renewal of himself by escaping from the perfection which he once so assiduously courted; that he should, in a word, shatter the mould of his placidity and completeness in order to build again out of some deep-lying need within himself. Renascence, one surmises, has been more difficult for Rilke than for many another poet.

Like the verses of Hofmannsthal and Stefan George Rilke's early poems manifest all the traces of a mind tenaciously clinging to form; the fate of these three men has been, naturally enough, to yield us, because of a disproportionate modicum of ecstasy, a lessened enjoyment and stimulation. But even if we grant that they gained in their finest poems the utmost limits of calm expression possible in the age in which they flowered, we would still miss something tumultuous and unfettered in their poems. And it is this lack which perhaps makes their work inferior to their native gifts. Perfection is not the attribute we look for in our greatest poets. The search for perfection, a sort of profound faith in its existence, the conflict and pathos and ache involved in laying bare its deepest traces leave their indelible stamp upon that poetry which troubles and lifts and sways us most. For it is the aspiration toward beauty that gives poetry its *raison d'être*, making it indeed intelligible to men's emotions. Poets are, the best of them at all events, like the eager gamesters Pascal has figured for us in his "Pensées," those who are ready to risk all for an absolute faith; but although it is God they hope to sweep into their wallets, in reality it is both faith that they stake and faith that they win at the end. The poet in the game of perfection, with possibly but one chance of winning and an infinite number of chances of losing, risks his art for what is after all a problematical gain. Whether he lose or win, there yet remains the conflict and pathos and ache of a lonely figure trying to find beauty in the world.

This pursuit for absolute beauty is clearly evidenced in Rilke's work, just as it is in Hofmannsthal's; both men gathered in their youth a not inconsiderable harvest of triumph, and for a long time it seemed that they could do nothing save repeat themselves, with hollower and hollower echoes of their own matchless faith in perfection. Happily, in the case of Rilke, as two recently published volumes indicate, the menace of failure is cleanly past. Since "Neue Gedichte," still couched in the older temper, we have had, beside several prose excursions, "Duineser Elegien" (1923) and "Sonnette an Orpheus" (1923). His studies of painters, his short stories and miscellaneous fragments, impress us with a feeling that the deep lingering over form has passed from his verse into his prose work. As far back as 1904, when he wrote that delightful group of short stories, mainly for children, entitled "Vom Lieben Gott," it was fairly predictable that a level and flexible prose would sooner or later absorb the plastic side of this writer.

In the youthful poems one finds everywhere an intelligent will that rarely falters, rarely breaks down, rarely lays bare its own human weaknesses. Borne along on the taut surfaces, the reader yet awaits some outbreak of unconfined emotion to surge up and overpower this calm and impeccable sense of form. But this never happens. In poetry like Rilke's if the reader can discern no other element save form he is apt to miss what he has every right to expect, namely poetry; the poet speaking out of the vibrating center of himself. "For it is not meter," as Emerson said, "but a meter-making argument that makes a poem." If we take argument to mean the central emotion of the poem this simple statement may very easily swell to the dimensions of an aesthetic theory. It is perhaps the only one that explains the poetic rebirth of Rainer Maria Rilke. In "Duineser Elegien" the storm bursts through and both poet and reader are carried away by the crowded tumult of feelings.

In "Sonnette an Orpheus" the process of

change and growth is also easy to note; some unutterably powerful stress, we perceive, has fallen upon the poet, precipitated his fundamental emotions about life, nature and the world of men, made him quiver to what he sees and touches, and to what he cannot see and cannot touch, so that almost unawares he has transcended himself. The will-to-balance has at last broken down. In both of these late volumes we discover a transport of pantheism, giving rise to an unforeseen beauty which he could never utter in his early verses. This pantheism is not unlike that of Franz Werfel, a much younger man, who mixes earth and sea and stars with the childlike heart of man, with man's intense longing for perfect communion. Rilke, after passing through a number of intermediate phases, has now reached that height of animated music that was vouchsafed Werfel at the start of his poetic career. He has thus gained a more throbbing contact with nature through the swift passion which men of his maturity scarcely ever achieve. This is what is so fascinating about this poet's latest phase. We encounter signs of his rebirth in almost every line he now writes. We recognize it and respond to it vividly in such lines as the following:

Und wenn dich dass Irdische vergass  
Zu der stille Erde sag: Ich rinne,  
Zu der raschen Wasser sprich: Ich bin.

## The New Books Fiction

(Continued from page 186)

a fairy tale as this modern age has produced, and yet which is dominated by a grace and beauty of style such as few mere fairy tales possess, and is rendered significant by an unostentatious symbolism that one may accept or disregard at will. The story is no less fantastic than the title indicates; there are elves and trolls a-plenty; there are walking trees and fighting ivy and enchanted swords and magic runes; there are witches and unicorns and timeless mountains and ageless maidens and years that pass like days; and there is a narrative that proceeds at a rapid pace, with many variations and complications, from the beginning of the volume to the end. Children would be delighted by the book, but adults should find it a source of unique enjoyment.

SUNCLOUDS. By OCTAVUS ROY COHEN. New York. Dodd, Mead. 1924. \$2.

Mr. Cohen adds a sixth volume to his collections of short stories of negro life. The present reviewer—an orthodox Southerner—has read the nine stories in the book with many a hearty laugh, with warm appreciation of Mr. Cohen's skill in narrative, and has been struck, as always, with the author's ingenuity in piling circumstance upon circumstance in the construction of plot. Here and there the reviewer has recognized gratefully an illuminating stroke having some true quality of negro humor. Clever, immensely popular these stories are, and probably will continue to be.

Yet the book was put down with a real feeling of regret that such stories should be known to more persons, and accepted by that larger following as a true picture of negro life and character, than the serious work of half a dozen other authors who penetrate the minds and souls of colored folk with a fine sincerity of understanding. The fact is that Mr. Cohen's stories are no more true in any respect than the common Irish or Jewish vaudeville sketch is of the lives of those peoples,—or than the Sunday comic sheet is of our normal existence.

Is it fair to place in the scales in judging a writer's work the social implications of his stories when they have a bearing upon a problem as grave as our negro problem is? It is fair, in the sense that one may demand that the writer be answerable to the truth when he deals with such precious things as a people's character. Mr. Cohen rattles off extravagant farce after farce such as burnt cork comedians might do in their turn. But one may search the pages of his books in vain for a single hint that these black folk ever have a thought or a stirring of the soul which would lift them above the dignity of a circus clown in costume. The banal jacket blurb compares them to Uncle Remus's stories—a libel on Joel Chandler Harris. Cohen's negroes are the negroes of the drummer's anecdotes in the Pullman smoking compartment.

The familiar characters reappear in this

volume—Florian Slaphey, Lawyer Evans Chew, Semore Mashby and others. They are funny—regrettably funny.

THE BOY IN THE BUSH. By D. H. LAURENCE and M. L. SKINNER. Seltzer. \$2.50.

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THAT LATE UNPLEASANTNESS. By NORVAL RICHARDSON. Small, Maynard. \$2 net.

MAGIC AND MARY ROSE. By FAITH BALDWIN. Small, Maynard. \$2 net.

THE SACRAMENT OF SILENCE. By NOEL SYLVESTRE. Macmillan. \$1.75.

kind publishing friend, with introductory fanfare by Vincent Starrett and accompanying pennons of decorations by James Cady Ewell. Of authentic columnists who are deft versifiers there is no recent dearth; "Don Juan" Grimes is, in the main, a disciple of the initial men, B. L. T. and F. P. A. Yet at times, perhaps by virtue of his more rustic seat of action, he weaves a whimsy out of moonbeams playing upon engines or trolley cars, or over open spaces. Starrett's introductory enthusiasm seems ill placed; yet there is something that catches one in the auto driver whose light, as he turns a curve, makes a path of light beyond a precipice, and:

It's a very pretty road  
When cut in silver light,  
And I should like to ride that way  
If I am drunk some night.

Nor are there many more successful casual lines than "Conversazione":

Coffee together  
after a walk;  
blow at a feather  
we call talk. . . .

And we shall say  
a light goodbye  
and go our way  
and the feather lie

to be swept up  
when the waiter comes  
with empty cup  
and wafer crumbs.

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**The Reader's Guide**

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

**A BALANCED RATION FOR WEEK-END READING**

**CRITICAL STUDIES OF THE WORKS OF CHARLES DICKENS.** By GEORGE GISSING (Greenberg).

**JUNGLE BEASTS I HAVE CAPTURED.** By CHARLES MEYER (Doubleday, Page).

**BARE SOULS.** By GAMALIEL BRADFORD (Harpers).

S. B., New York, says: "Given a business man whose interests are *perfice utilitarian*, who has almost lost the little Latin he once possessed, what books shall he study and what method shall he pursue to regain a modest knowledge of the language? The older text-books—to me—reek of the seminar. Surely some humanist has treated even Latin grammar in a more imaginative fashion?"

FROM the ivory tower in which the Guide does business there are signs not only on the horizon but well along the roads that humanism in the classics is on the way to proper recognition. The unexpected popularity of "The Legacy of Greece" (Oxford University Press) and its successors, the high standard maintained by the admirable series "Our Debt to Greece and Rome" (Marshall Jones) and the great number of readers it is gathering, show this with older readers, and the newer schoolbooks reveal it in other ways. In order to break away from the Caesar fetish, the English in particular have prepared little books with much charm for young students, such as R. B. Appleton's "Puer Romanus" (Oxford University Press), in which the editor tells in simple Latin the story of the Roman boy's life; the "Ludi Persici" of the same author, a series of delightful little plays (Oxford University Press), and another to take off the curse of the "dead language," the "Primus Annus" of W. L. Paine (Oxford University Press), which encourages the speaking of Latin. "Death laid its hand," says Dr. Hadzits, "not on Latin literature, but on the minds of some misguided individuals who curiously felt themselves called to teach Latin." The recent "Elementary Latin" of Ullman and Henry (Macmillan) possesses qualities all good teachers applaud, such as simplicity, clarity, explanation of the relations of Latin to English, and little Latin stories and mottoes of wide range. A little book typical of this tendency is the "Easy Latin for Sight Reading," prepared by B. L. D'Ooge (Ginn), which offers some charming stories from Aulus Gellius. I know of no other book that goes further to humanize the study of Latin than R. G. Kent's volume "Language and Philology" in the series "Our Debt to Greece and Rome."

Teachers as well as students like S. B. will be glad to learn that the editor of this series, Dr. George Depue Hadzits of the University of Pennsylvania, is now at work on a new set of text-books that will break from the old tradition and seek to make the whole subject live as it cannot in the Ciceros and Caesars in common use. For example, his second-year reader builds up a book with Caesar as central figure, giving original source material about his life, a few specimens from the Gallic and Civil Wars, and a background drawn from many sources, revealing the nature of his environment as a whole, with passages dealing with his education, private and public life, religion, the city of Rome, and the like. Given the least encouragement, boys will be interested in the personality of Julius Caesar; I leave it to anyone what encouragement this book will give.

The Loeb Library of classical translations (Putnam) with text on one side and English on the other, has brought joy to many a middle-aged reader who wants to "get back his Latin." And the survey of the American Classical League, of which Dean West of Princeton is president, will be ready this fall, and will be of great importance to teachers.

W. H. Allen, famous bookman of Philadelphia, reminds me that the name of the author of the book on Ecclesiastical Latin should have been Nunn, not Munn.

H E says it was the printer but it was my typewriter. Also he tells the inquirer that Dr. C. H. Beeson of the University of Chicago has in active preparation, possibly now in press, a "Reader of Late Latin," which will fill a great want.

J. E. W., New York, asks what books would give a college boy of eighteen, trying to find what business he would like best, some idea of the nature and routine of various kinds of manufacturing and mercantile business.

T HE latest to appear is by C. H. Ernst of the *Youth's Companion* and the *Open Road*; it is "What Shall I Be? Open Roads for Young Men," and has been recently published by Appleton. Two books that led the way in giving vocational information, both published by Ginn in 1916, are "Business Employments," by F. J. Allen of the Bureau of Vocational Guidance at Harvard, and "Occupations," by Gowin and Wheatley. The Labor Statistics Bureau at Washington, D. C., issues separate pamphlets on various occupations, which are sent on application.

A. S., New York, asks for books with a representative selection of modern American poetry. As he is choosing a gift he wishes it to be pleasing in appearance, and prefers a de luxe edition.

I WOULD get the collection whose poems pleased you best, regardless of appearance, and have the volume rebound as luxuriously as you please. There is a special sweetness about a special binding—and if it has the name of the receiver on the cover all the better. My own battered Dickens has just been rebound, and on the label, at a respectful distance below his name and in small type, is mine. It is a fair sight . . . to the owner.

"New Poetry" (Macmillan), is an excellent collection made by Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin, with a great many poems from both sides of the Atlantic but more from ours and from the "newer" poets. It is the largest of the anthologies of contemporary verse, but does not make a clumsy volume. Untermeyer's "Modern American Poetry" (Harcourt, Brace) is widely read; of the smaller books there is Le Gallienne's "Anthology of American Verse" (Boni & Liveright) and the earlier but none the less desirable "Little Book of American Verse," edited by Jessie Rittenhouse (Houghton Mifflin) which comes in leather. The Braithwaite annual "Anthology of Magazine Verse and Year Book of American Poetry" (Brimmer), which has become a national institution, is published not only in the regular form but in a special edition at \$7.50.

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## Points of View

### A Correction

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

On page 46 of the second edition of H. L. Mencken's "American Language" is the following passage, repeated without change from the first edition:

"Scarcely two years after the Declaration of Independence, Franklin was instructed by Congress, on his appointment as Minister to France, to employ 'the language of the United States,' not simply English, in all his 'replies or answers' to the communications of the ministry of Louis XVI."

This I believe, is a mistake, and since the passage is quoted without comment by Professor McKnight in his "English Words and Their Background," and may have been accepted unquestioningly by other writers, I shall endeavor to point out the error.

The truth is that the phrase "language of the United States," as it occurs in the Secret Journals of the Continental Congress for July 20, 1778, has no reference to Franklin and his mission to France, but relates solely to the report of a committee "appointed to report on the time and manner of the publick reception of the sieur Gerard, minister plenipotentiary of his most christian majesty." The passage (vol. 2, page 95) runs as follows:

"When the minister plenipotentiary or envoy is arrived at the door of the Congress hall, he shall be introduced to his chair by the two members, who shall stand at his left hand. Then the member first named shall present and announce him to the President and the house; whereupon he shall bow to the President and the Congress, and they to him. He and the President shall then again bow unto each other, and be seated; after which the house shall sit down. . . . All speeches or communications in writing may, if the publick ministers choose it, be in the language of their respective countries. And all replies, or answers, shall be in the language of the United States."

At the sitting of August 6, some doubts having arisen respecting the ceremonial, new resolutions were adopted regarding the bowing and sitting down, but nothing was said about the language to be used by the envoy or the members, and the instructions given to Benjamin Franklin (October 22, 1778, page 107) contain nothing whatever regarding the language to be used.

It is, I think, apparent that the phrase "language of the United States," as it appears in the Secret Journals, meant simply the language commonly used in the United States, that is, the English language, especially as opposed to the French, which was then regarded throughout Europe as the appropriate language of diplomacy.

FRED NEWTON SCOTT  
University of Michigan

### Mr. Cohen Protests

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

In laying such heavy critical hands on my volume "The Jews in the Making of America," the critic seems to be laboring under a lack of comprehension of the scope and nature of the volume.

"The Jews in the Making of America" is the first of a series of volumes published under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus. The object of these publications is to call attention to the fact that America of today is not the creation of a single racial or religious group but its composite fabric contains threads of a large number of diverse elements. These volumes are not concerned with the internal life and the religious or racial evolution of the groups, but with their influence on the life of the American people as a whole. Their purpose is to depict the varied groups at the point of contact with the life of the Republic.

Dr. Bernheimer, who is a social worker, is under the illusion that a work of this nature must contain an elaborate description of his particular specialty and that any work on the Jews that does not depict the work of Jewish social service or allied activities is therefore inconsequential. This is a very natural error, of every specialist who lugs in his particular specialty upon every occasion. Jewish social service and kindred activities minister to Jews. They are in a very indirect sense contributions to America. Their evolution has but little place in a volume on the Jew in the making of America. Their place is rather in a work on "America in the Making of the Jews."

Dr. Bernheimer, who I understand is at work on a book the scope of which is akin to my own, seems to be animated by a desire to pick flaws and picayune defects. With one sweeping Olympian gesture, he consigns my volume to the limbo of the worthless. He mistakes the function of criticism to be simply fault-finding without any attempt at fair balancing of virtues and defects. The comparative newness of the subject, the difficulty of collecting material, the infinite number of periodicals to be ransacked, these are no concern to him.

Nor does he stop at petty fault finding. He takes me to task, for instance, for not mentioning the Jewish Encyclopedia. This is a deliberate misrepresentation. On page 236 he will find a description of the work of the Jewish Encyclopedia. He takes me to task for not mentioning synagogue activity. This is another misrepresentation. He will find a treatment of that on pages 233 to 236.

Furthermore, he takes me to task for not delineating in full the group contributions of the Jews. What there is Jewish about the work of Edna Ferber, of the organizing activity of Bernard Baruch, of the violin playing of Heifitz, might be visible to Dr. Bernheimer; to me, alas, it is not apparent. Jews who contribute to America do so because they are gifted individuals—not because they are Jews, and this talk of group contribution is largely a venture into mythological realms. The ounce of reality in it has been outweighed by pounds of theory and exaggerations. The contributions of a group in America to the upbuilding of this country are largely the contributions of its gifted members.

GEORGE COHEN

Brooklyn, N. Y.

### Again "The Mere Man"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

I have not read Charles M. Sheldon's "The Mere Man," but I am moved to a certain sympathy for the author after reading his letter of protest on the subject of your review of the book and the reviewer's reply to the protest.

Why is the incident of the father who gives up smoking to influence his son to do the same an "anachronism"? A father might have done that in my father's time or in my grandfather's time but I or many men might do it now. The "hysterically emotional gesture" describes your reviewer's own emotional state, not the fact.

Manifestly it is a very curious gesture that assigns the society that the reviewer frequents to the twentieth century and the society out of which came the prohibition amendment to the sixth century. Where is the history that justifies any such conclusion? What the reviewer implies is just the reverse of the truth. If twentieth century America felt toward the prohibition amendment as the reviewer does there could have been no prohibition amendment.

I write from a small village in the far west. It is not as old as New York but according to your reviewer's logic it must belong to the sixth century because it approves the amendment. Whether I qualified for the sixth century by a long residence in Chicago I do not know, because I am ignorant of the status of Chicago in the reviewer's mind. Possibly New York is the only twentieth century city we have.

Having said this much as a mere suggestion that there is some difficulty in deciding what is and what is not paleozoic I hope to commend myself to the reviewer's good will by acknowledging that I smoke and that I never signed the pledge.

S. P. PATTERSON  
Saratoga, California.

### Edward Spencer

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

Under the direction of the Graduate Department of English at Johns Hopkins University, I am proposing to make a critical study of the life and work of Edward Spencer, journalist and author, who was born in Talbot County, Maryland, in 1834, and died in Baltimore in 1883. I should be grateful to any readers of *The Saturday Review* for information about Mr. Spencer, or for the loan of letters written by him.

M. MILLICENT CAREY  
1004 Cathedral St., Baltimore, Md.

## The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

### CARTER BROWN LIBRARY REPORTS

THE collection of Americana, started by John Carter Brown and continued by his sons, now ranks as one of the two or three most important in its field in the world. When John Nicholas Brown died May 1, 1900, under the terms of his will, the library collected by his father and enlarged by himself and brother Harold, was transferred to Brown University in May, 1904. Mr. Brown also provided \$150,000 for a building together with an endowment of \$500,000. The great collection, the work of two generations, still continues to grow along the lines originally planned, under the direction of a committee appointed by the corporation of the university.

The purpose of its founder was the collection of material relating to the three Americas, printed before the year 1801. This plan is still being effectively carried out. The year 1923-24 concludes the second decade of the John Carter Brown Library as a part of Brown University. The annual report just submitted touches upon the growth of the library during this period and the notable acquisitions during the past year. The single feature in which the library has undergone noticeable change is in the size of the collection. In the two decades just concluded, 15,035 volumes, or about one-half of the present collection, have been added to the original gift. This enlargement has been accomplished in no small measure by the acquisition of books which seemed relatively unimportant in the days when the collection was forming. Eighteenth century material, for example, seemed naturally of inferior interest to the early nineteenth century collector, but with the passing years the literature of this period has taken on increasing importance to the student and in no lesser degree to the completeness of the library.

Of the 350 titles added to the library in the past year, 161 were by purchase and the remainder by gift. These titles include

many books and pamphlets of the greatest historical interest. Both in Spain and in Spanish America, before the day of the newspaper, the occasional news sheet was the customary medium for the dissemination of important news of the moment. The letter printed at Barcelona in 1493 announcing the discovery of an unknown land by Christopher Columbus was not an isolated but a customary instance of this use of the press, and for the three succeeding centuries when news of the colonies was carried to Spain or news of Spain to the colonies, it passed from the hands of the ship captain to the printer, who brought it at once to the attention of the people in the form of a hastily printed sheet of one or two leaves often bearing the title of a "relacion," of the event or events in question. In past years a point has been made of collecting these irregular news sheets, finding in them information of value to the student of history as well as many elements of bibliographical interest. Early in the year, acting in co-operation with the Harvard College Library, an important collection of these "relaciones" were purchased and the portion of the lot received by the John Carter Brown Library included thirty-one titles. Of these fourteen were unknown to Medina. Fourteen were printed in Spain, thirteen at Lima, and the remainder in Mexico and elsewhere. One of the latest was an account, printed in Cadiz, of General Oglethorpe's badly timed expedition against St. Augustine in 1740. It is needless to say that this original source material is an acquisition of the greatest importance.

The most important single accession during the year was a hitherto unknown Virginia tobacco pamphlet, with the following title:

"A dialogue between Thomas Sweet-Scented, William Oronoco, Planters, both Men of Good Understanding, and Justice Love-Country, who can speak for himself, Recommended to the Reading of the Planters. By a sincere lover of Virginia. The

## The Next Issue—

The October 18th issue of

## The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

will be the

### FALL ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER

BESIDE the regular weekly features, this issue will contain an unusual number of reviews of important fall books, a summary of the fall book season, special articles on typography and book illustration, an essay on "Romance" by Frank Swinnerton.

Booksellers have made preparations to meet an unusual demand for the Fall Announcement Number, but it is impossible for them to gauge the sale in advance. We would urge SATURDAY REVIEW readers who have been buying their copies at Bookshops to place an order for the October 18th issue today.

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Third Edition. Williamsburg. Printed by William Parks. M,DCC,XXXII.

This small quarto pamphlet of twenty pages contains a discussion of the Virginia tobacco law of 1730. As there was no newspaper published in Virginia until 1736, it is doubtful if there exists in any other form so clear a statement as this proves to be of the case for and against the law which for many years agitated the colony and entered intimately into the lives and thoughts of the people. This pamphlet furthermore has a high quality of bibliographical interest in the collection of which it forms a part. In spite of the fact that it went through three editions, its very title had been forgotten until this copy was discovered. It is, therefore, an early issue of the Virginia press of William Parks, a Maryland and Virginia printer whose imprints, of the first social and economic importance, rarely come into the book market.

#### FORTHCOMING SALES

ON October 14 the library of the late Charles A. Stearns of Boston, will be sold at the Anderson Galleries. This collection contains many books of American historical interest, including local and state histories, as well as considerable material of general literary character. There is also an extensive collection of various editions of Walton's "Angler."

On October 14, books, pamphlets and broadsides relating to the French and Indian War, the Stamp Act, the American Revolution, and the adoption of the Federal Constitution, will be sold under the management of Charles F. Hartman at Metuchen, N. J. This collection contains many rarities of the greatest importance, catalogued with great care, and with many illuminating bibliographical notes. Collectors interested in Americana of this character should not miss this catalogue.

#### NOTE AND COMMENT

A NEW volume in the Vine Series for collectors is "The Bright Island" by Arnold Bennett. Like all Vine books, it is a first edition, set by hand, printed throughout in two colors, on Kelmscott hand-made paper.

In a recent article in *The Bookman's Journal*, Albert M. Cohn, the bibliographer, calls attention to the fact that it was only a comparatively short time ago that editions issued in monthly parts, mainly in the Victorian period, had become so popular with collectors that many items were bringing sensational high prices. For instances, we have good illustrations in Dickens' "PICKWICK PAPERS," and Thackeray's "VANITY FAIR," both of which have brought thousands of dollars in auction sales on both sides of the Atlantic.

## Points of View

(Continued from preceding page)

THOMAS N. TALFOURD

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:  
SIR:

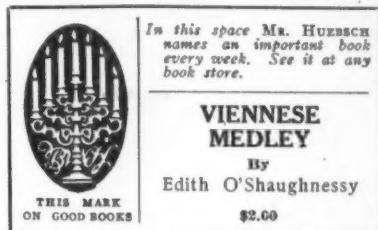
Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795-1854) is the subject of a biography on which I have been working for somewhat more than two years. I am also collecting Talfourd's letters, and am preparing a critique of his work in the field of letters. He was the friend of Coleridge, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Godwin, Dickens, Thackeray, Browning and others, and he was the special friend and literary executor of Charles Lamb. He was an author in his own name, too, writing essays, criticisms, books of travel, political articles and verse, and four plays. "Ion" was produced by Macready in 1836, was the play of the period, and is still read occasionally.

I shall be very grateful if you can find space to insert on your page a brief notice of the purpose for which I desire your readers to correspond with me if they have any manuscripts, letters or special information of Talfourd.

ROBERT S. NEWICK

368 North Fourth Street, Columbus, Ohio

The Graduate School of Business Administration of Harvard, Bureau of Business Research, issues a number of bulletins of special importance such as "Operating expenses in retail shoe stores in 1923," and similar studies of retail hardware, grocery and department stores, and of the distribution of clothing by retail. The Bureau of Business Research of Northwestern University, Chicago, has a bulletin on selling expenses and their control in retail distribution of clothing. The latest book to cover these subjects is "The Merchant's Manual," edited by Hahn and White and published this year by the McGraw-Hill Co. "Marketing Practice," by White and Hayward (Doubleday, Page), has sections on "The Retail System" and "The Mail Order House," and these are both treated in P. H. Nystrom's standard work on "Economics of Retailing" (Ronald).



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## The Phoenix Nest

WE have found us a country hermitage, having lingered in Manhattan just long enough to attend the first night of "That Awful Mrs. Eaton," where we were enchanted by the prettiness and charm of Miss Katherine Alexander, and by Minor Watson's performance of the Tennessean Major Taylor—by all odds the most real Southerner we have ever seen on the stage. In the playhouse we encountered Kathleen and Charles G. Norris—Mr. Norris being in a state approaching exhaustion from choosing furniture for a new apartment on the upper West Side. We also ran into Mr. Robert Nathan, whose "The Puppet-Master" we regard as a delicate masterpiece. Mr. Nathan, having now got his book about Jonah quite out of his system, is looking better than we have ever seen him, his distinguished countenance well-bronzed from the rugged life in the wilds—at least, we suppose that is where he has been! But now, accompanied by the Phoenix, the Princess Badrulbadour, and several fabulous young creatures, we are settled in the bracing air of Connecticut; and we have found, beside the exhilarating book, "Traveller's Joy," upon which we expatiated last week, another volume of precious worth wherewith to beguile the f. y. c. referred to. This volume is—we speak out in advance of its publication—"A Guide to Caper," the text being by Thomas Bodkin and the pictures by Denis Eden (those are real names, by the way!) The slender book is sure to enchant the young creatures quite as much as it has us, for it is one of those juveniles that happen only once in a blue moon. The illustrations are deft and dreamy.

Speaking of illustrations and children's books, those of "The Dream Coach" (Macmillan) by Anne and Dillwyn Parrish (for children from eight to ten) are unusually effective and the book itself will reward examination. Connoisseurs of children's books will remember the Parrishes (who are brother and sister, the former being Mrs. Corliss, who wrote that delightful "Pocket Full of Poses") from their "Knee High to a Grasshopper" of last year. From Eight Arlington Street, come some neatly typed literary notes among which is one of particular interest, in view of Mr. Stuart P. Sherman's new editorship of Books, that excellent literary supplement to the Herald-Tribune. Said note avers that Mr. Sherman in his latest volume, "My Dear Cornelia," shows occasional signs of wavering in his fight against the Menckens (if indeed it is possible that there are more Menckens than the one, sole and only original H. L.!) Mr. Sherman is quoted as saying, "I have even allowed myself to wonder faintly at times whether unwillingness to confess may not be, as our direful Midwestern school contends, the chief distinction between respectable people and the other sort. It is a horrid doubt concerning which no one but the novelist betrays much curiosity or provides much light."

Next Wednesday appears a new novel by the author of "Bunk," W. E. Woodward. It is entitled "Lottery," and is a satire upon the successful business man. Philadelphia, we also report, is to publish a journal of culture, *The Guardian*. Waldo Frank has just returned from abroad, following his manu-

script of "Chalk Face," which was sent to his publishers from the Sahara Desert, and revised in Spain. Lewis Mumford has made an interesting study of American architecture and civilization in "Sticks and Stones." Two novels we are reading with pleasure are Glenway Westcott's "The Apple of the Eye," and Stella Benson's "Pipers and a Dancer." The illustrations of Mead Schaeffer chastely adorn both the new Dodd, Mead edition of Melville's "Omoo" and the new Stokes edition of John Masefield's boys' book, "Jim Davis"; and N. C. Wyeth has illustrated Bulfinch's "Legends of Charlemagne" with his usual richness of color. Lighter books that will entertain you are Christopher Ward's new parodies, "Twisted Tales," Nancy Boyd's "Distressing Dialogues" (by that jaunty spirit so closely akin to Edna St. Vincent Millay), and Gordon Phillips's "Brighter Intervals." Phillips is the humorous essayist and rhymester of *Punch* and the *Manchester Guardian*; he can give you a recipe for a salad, instruct you in laying down a cellar, or edify you with a discussion of hygiene in the home—all imitatively. And then, for the amateur mariner, of which there is so great a profusion nowadays, how about E. Keble Chatterton's "Seamen All," true stories of adventures at sea, from the days of the Barbary pirates down to the World War. Here is a record of oceanic battle with every sort of maritime danger, by a sea historian, late Lieutenant-Commander R. N. V. R., who has already chronicled the merchant service and many other aspects of the sea with a particularly pregnant pen.

We are delighted to see such a tribute to Mrs. Edward MacDowell as appeared last Saturday in *The Reader*, a Club Bulletin Magazine edited by Louise E. Hogan, author of a Mothers' hand-book which has now run to ten editions. Mrs. Hogan's bulletin is published in order to circulate a friendly but independent medium of information between members of various clubs and associations interested and engaged in more or less the same character of work. The short article on Mrs. MacDowell will, we hope, acquaint many new people with her wonderful five hundred acres in the hills of New Hampshire, with the dream which she has invested with concrete form during past years, with the unique Petersboro Colony, the one certain place of peace for the working artist. We know of remarkable music, novel-writing, biography and poetry perfected there this last summer; work of indubitable distinction that adds lustre to the achieved vision of the colony, which should be one of our most honored national institutions.

Grant Overton is the most voluminous writer on contemporary writers of whom we have cognizance. His "Cargoes for Crusoes" is now out, and here comes also his "Authors of the Day." "Cargoes" is published jointly by Appleton, Doran and Little, Brown, and is a series of explorations among new books and favorite authors; "Authors of the Day" contains personal accounts of twenty-five famous writers. Grant's industry makes us almost despair of keeping up this column.

At any rate, we refer you to Grant for any other information you need this week. We've got to go home and try to start the furnace!

W. R. B.

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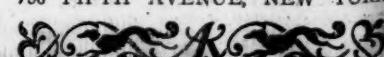
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OCTOBER 18, 1924



Romance

By Frank Swinnerton

American Book Illustration

By Matlack Price

The Rebirth of Typographical Art

By W. A. Dwiggins

"Barrett Wendell and His Letters"

Reviewed by Roger Burlingame

Anderson's "A Story Teller's Story"

Reviewed by William Rose Benét

The Bowling Green

By Christopher Morley

A Survey of the Fall Books

By Amy Loveman

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